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RETENTION OF FIRST AND SECOND CLASS PETTY OFFICERS IN THE U.S. COAST GUARD

Franklin Timothy Fowler
David James Ramsey

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
Monterey, California

THESIS

RETENTION OF FIRST AND SECOND CLASS PETTY OFFICERS IN THE U.S. COAST GUARD

by

Franklin Timothy Fowler
and
David James Ramsey, Jr.

September 1979

Thesis Advisor: John Senger

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As expressed by these petty officers, the major causes of voluntary separation from the service are declining benefits and inadequate pay. Additional causes are poor leadership, the poor quality of subordinates, and an inability to specialize in one aspect of their rates.

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Retention of first and second class petty officers in the U.S. Coast Guard

by

Franklin Timothy Fowler
Lieutenant, United States Coast Guard
B.S., Carson-Newman College, 1970

and

David James Ramsey, Jr.
Lieutenant, United States Coast Guard
B.S., United States Coast Guard Academy, 1971

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MANAGEMENT

from the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
September 1979

ABSTRACT

This research project attempts to isolate the causes of the high rate of turnover amongst first and second class petty officers in the Coast Guard. Coast Guardsmen stationed in San Francisco and in the south Texas area, from a large variety of units and occupational specialties, provide input to this research effort. Questionnaires and interviews are used as the survey technique to obtain information from first and second class petty officers. Two-hundred and sixty-four petty officers responded to the questionnaire and thirty-three from San Francisco were interviewed by the authors. The average age of a respondent is twenty-six and most are in their second or subsequent enlistment in the Coast Guard. More than half indicated they are definitely leaving or considering leaving the Coast Guard at the end of their present enlistments.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The all-volunteer force of the 70's, a term used to describe Department of Defense forces in this no-draft era, has been portrayed as an organization "which operates on the basis of extensive turnover." [Janowitz, Moskos, 1979, p. 210] Although not a defense department agency during peacetime, the Coast Guard is a functioning uniformed military organization with many operational missions as demanding as the other armed forces and a law enforcement duty which exacts great demands on its young men and women. Its rank structure, pay scales and benefits package, and terms of enlistment are identical with those of the other armed forces. The Coast Guard is faced with the same dilemma of rapid personnel turnover as the all-volunteer force. A recent Commandant's notice outlined this present difficulty: [Commandant USCG, 29 November, 1978]

> We have been watching with increasing concern as our reenlistment rates continue to fall. The first term monthly reenlistment rate for petty officers recommended for reenlistment is now 15.5% and the subsequent term reenlistment rate is 66.2%. This compares with the previous year's monthly average of 26.8% and 75.6%, respectively. The rate for personnel beyond their first enlistment shows a consistent two year decline from a high of 87.5%.
>
> The causes of this decline are many and varied and probably include the unusually low unemployment rate and the expansion of Coast Guard missions. The ramifications of declining reenlistments are severe and highlight an unacceptable loss of our skilled manpower and dilution of our professionalism.

The persistent loss of trained and experienced petty officers upon the completion of eight to ten years service is particularly damaging, for at the end of their second enlistment their value to the service cannot be overestimated. They are the junior level leaders who get the job done. Younger personnel look to them for advice and leadership while officers

and chiefs must rely on their skills and dedication. The increasing tendency of Coast Guardsmen upon completion of their second enlistments "to vote with their feet" is alarming. The marked drop in first term petty officer enlistment rates compounds the problem.

What is forcing these men and women to leave the service — a perception of eroding pay and benefits, poor leadership, a failure to identify with Coast Guard goals and missions? The purpose of this research project is to attempt to isolate the causes of low retention rates or high turnover of the service's first and second class petty officers. While some observers may have little doubt that factors such as pay and benefits are the significant factors, this study used extensive questionnaires and interviews to learn how important pay and other items such as job satisfaction, leadership, and present assignment are in the decision making process leading to reenlistment or separation. This thesis does not study the attitudes, personalities, or performance records of the personnel who were interviewed or answered questionnaires, and then seek relationships between these variables and turnover. Instead it is hoped this thesis will serve as a vehicle allowing Coast Guardsmen to express their thoughts concerning staying in or leaving the service.

Through the analysis of survey and interview data, this thesis sought to identify personnel policies, organizational procedures, and major sources of irritation disturbing petty officers that can be changed or improved by the Coast Guard without recourse to Congress. By defining these problems, which Coast Guard management could deal with alone, and those which will take Congressional action to improve (such as pay), it is hoped that the results of this study will be most useful. Furthermore the authors have sought to reflect in the conclusion the opinions and concerns of the petty officers who were surveyed and interviewed.

II. BACKGROUND, RELATED RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

Behavioral scientists and organizational development researchers have developed many hypotheses about the causes of voluntary job turnover. Turnover, as the following sections will demonstrate, is generally recognized in private industry as a serious financial problem and one which results in reduced organizational efficiency and cohesion. Consequently academe has shown a major interest in studying and devising both descriptive and predictive models and explanations of job turnover and job motivations. A brief review of some of the literature is essential to an understanding of job turnover and its antecedents. (It is noteworthy that a considerable amount of the academic work on the subject has been sponsored by U. S. Navy research funds.)

A. HERZBERG'S THEORY OF MOTIVATION

Job satisfaction is commonly accepted as the most significant agent bearing upon retention. Perhaps the most useful, easily comprehended, and still popular explanation of job satisfaction is Frederick Herzberg's two-factor motivation model. Originally espoused in the late 50's, it has stood the test of time relatively well and is still supported and discussed in current literature. [Karp, Nickson, 1973] His theory divides human needs on the job into two basic components. One part is man's desire to avoid pain and be comfortable. The other basic component is related to the typically human characteristics of the need to achieve, to accomplish something with one's life or work. This need for achievement or growth can be met by the intrinsic nature of work or job content, and is internal and motivating. The want pertaining to the desire to be comfortable and avoid

pain, is satisfied by things which are external to the job itself or extrinsic. Called hygiene factors, they include such things as pay, status, company policies, interpersonal relationships on the job, and other working conditions. Intrinsic job content factors, or motivators, include the work itself, the opportunity for advancement and promotion, and the inherent qualities of the job which provide the employee with a sense of accomplishment and self-worth. [Herzberg, 1966] These values, motivators and hygiene factors, taken cumulatively into consideration, essentially encompass an employee's attitudes about his job and the degree of satisfaction he obtains in the work environment. And job satisfaction is a critical part, perhaps the most important single component of an employee's decision to stay or leave his organization and/or his job. [Porter and Steers, 1973]

B. COMMITMENT

Organizational commitment is a major adjunct to job satisfaction. Commitment to an organization and job satisfaction have been differentiated by recent research. An employee's general attitude toward his company may be more important in his decision to remain or leave, than an individual's attitudes about his job. This is apparent in those cases where the employee withdraws from his organization only to find similar work in another company. [Steers, 1977, Porter et al, 1974] Steers defines organizational commitment as the "relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization." [Steers, 1977, p. 47] An employee with a high degree of commitment to the company will have strong desire to continue in the organization, be prepared to work hard for it, and believe in its goals and goodness. [Porter et al, 1976]

Steers has hypothesized that the antecedents of organizational commitment are personal characteristics of the individual employee, job characteristics, and work experiences as shown in Figure 1. [Steers, 1977,p.47]

In his study of two separate employee samples (hospital workers and scientists and engineers) all three factors (employee characteristics, job characteristics, and work experiences) were found important, with work experiences the most related to commitment. In another study, of management trainees in a large retail organization, it was learned that as an employee approaches closer to termination with the company, his commitment to the organization grows weaker. [Porter et al, 1976] Unresolved is the question of which comes first, the decision to leave, or the reduced commitment to the organization.

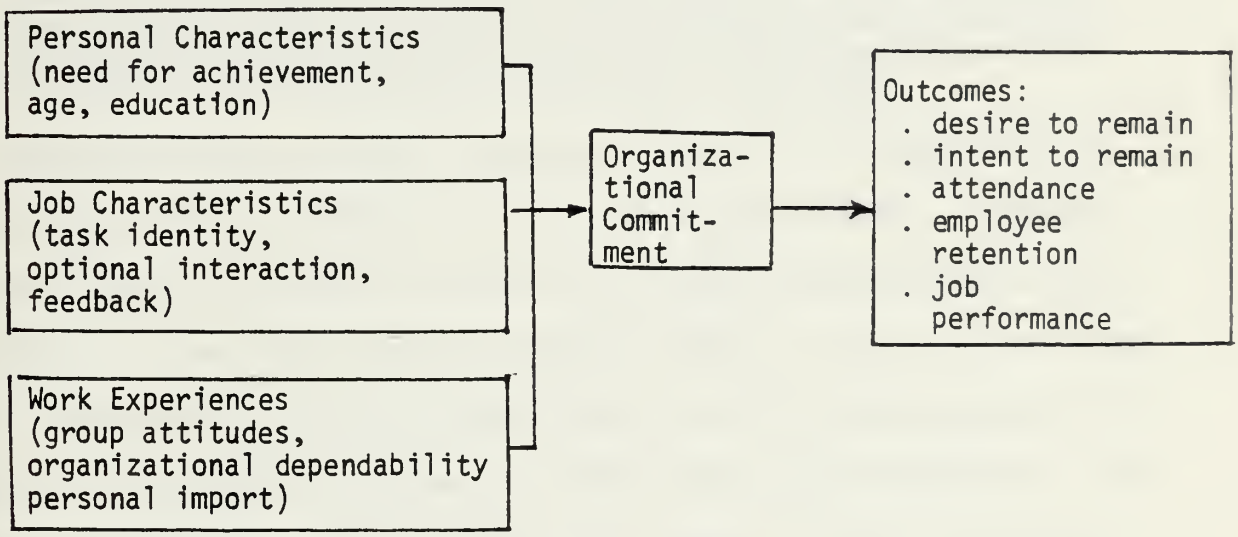
Personal Characteristics (need for achievement, age, education)
Job Characteristics (task identity, optional interaction, feedback)
Work Experiences (group attitudes, organizational dependability personal import)
Organizational Commitment
Outcomes:
. desire to remain
. intent to remain
. attendance
. employee retention
. job performance

Figure 1. [From Steers, 1977] Hypothesized antecedents and Outcomes of Organizational Commitment

C. EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEIVED INEQUITIES

Turnover decisions are also related to met or unmet expectations. [Ilgen and Seely, 1974; Dunnette et al, 1973; Porter et al, 1974] Employees usually have high expectations of both motivation and hygiene factors being satisfied on their new jobs. Stayers find less variance with their expectations than do leavers. Realistic information concerning the job, received before or after the individual's decision to take the position and before

his first day on the job, can cause a reduction in turnover rates. [Ilgen and Seely, 1974] Expectations change over time and are continually adjusted, but as Porter and Steers explain, the organization which insures that an effort is made to make those expectations more accurate can anticipate both increased performance and retention. [Porter and Steers, 1973, p. 172]

> ... the organization can attempt to increase the present or potential employee's accuracy and realism of expectations through increased communications concerning the nature of the job and the probable potential payoffs for effective performance. Where the employee fully understands what is expected of him and what the organization offers in return, the likelihood of him forming unrealistic expectations should decrease, resulting in increased possibilities that his expectations are actually met... Where these expectations have been essentially satisfied and where the employee has no reason to believe they will not continue to be satisfied in the future, we would expect an increase in the propensity to remain and participate in the activities of the organization.

Associated with commitment and expectations is the impact of "perceived inequities" on retention. Thus an employee may leave an organization not because of a need for higher pay or more promotion opportunities, but because he feels that promises have been broken or he is not receiving a just compensation for his work and talents. In fact, the employee's belief that he is unfairly paid may be a better predictor of withdrawal than is his dissatisfaction with the size of his income. [Porter and Steers, 1973] The employee's understanding of the availability of alternative work with higher pay and benfits for the same type job will lead to greater dissatisfaction and turnover.

D. ROLE ORIENTATION AND LEADER ACCEPTANCE

Graen and Ginsburgh have created a discerning model to explain an employee's connection to his organization and analyzed its application to what they call job resignation, or turnover. The model is called an "assimilation system" for determining how successful the organization has been in absorbing the employee. The two predominate instruments in the

process are role orientation and leader acceptance. Role orientation is used to describe the match between the employee and his assigned task. Employees who find their job relevant to their needs have greater autonomy, more information, more satisfaction, and are more frequently evaluated as good performers. Additionally workers with a successful role orientation were found to have left the organization at less than half the rate of those who were improperly fitted to the job. Leader acceptance is the term for the exchange between the employee and his immediate supervisor. It was found to be significant in the turnover decision process. Figure 2 is a reproduction of the drawing used by Graen and Ginsburgh to depict this "dual attachment" of members to the organization.

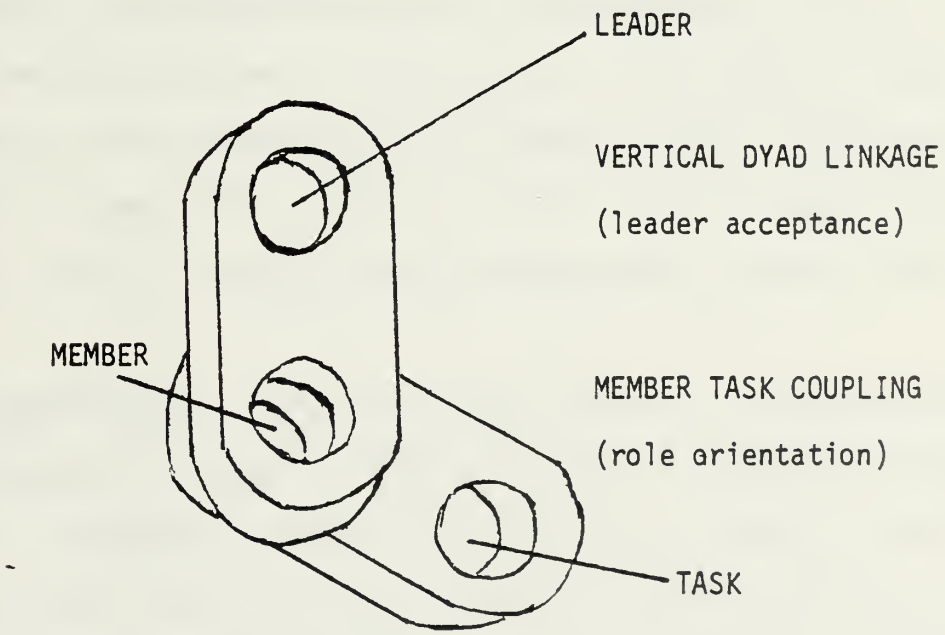

Figure 2. Dual organizational attachments of members. [Graen and Ginsburgh, 1977, p. 3]

The diagram shows the dual attachments of an employee to his organizational place, vertically to his leader and to his task by the member-task coupling.

An analysis of three service departments of a large midwestern university over a twenty-four month period was undertaken by Graen and Ginsburgh to check the validity of the model. It was learned that the inclination to quit was low for those workers who measured high in role orientation or leader acceptance, or both. The reverse was true for those who scored low on both linkages. Also, successful attachment in one link may make up for poor coupling in another. When both attachments were poor, the likelihood of job resignation was great. Thus both the importance of the job and the influence of the boss on an employee's turnover behavior have been shown. [Graen and Ginsburgh, 1977]

E. RECENT COMPREHENSIVE REVIEWS OF TURNOVER RESEARCH

Three major reviews of the literature in job turnover have described the turnover process exhaustively and comprehensively. Each attempts to systemize to some extent a complete picture of what is known about employee turnover. It will be useful here to summarize the schemata of the three works.

"Organizational, Work, and Personal Factors in Employee Turnover and Absenteeism" by Lyman W. Porter and Richard M. Steers was published in 1973. It examined in detail the research of the subject in the ten to twelve year period prior to publication. The authors stressed the importance of job satisfaction to the individual's decision to stay or leave. Then, four elements were used to categorize the work environment and related parts of the turnover process. These were classified as organization-wide factors, immediate work environment factors, job content factors,

and personal factors. [See Figure 3 for a tabularized breakdown of the description of the turnover process provided by Porter and Steers.] They also raised expectations and perceived inequities as variables useful in explaining how an individual worker may reach the conclusion that he must leave his job. Job satisfaction, the four major categories, and expectations and perceived inequities, complete the outline or "conceptual framework" which Porter and Steers used to explain both turnover and absenteeism. [Porter and Steers, 1973]

Organization-wide factors	Immediate work environment
Pay and Promotion	Supervisory style Work-unit size Peer-group interaction
Job content factors	Personal factors
Overall reaction to job Task repetitiveness Autonomy and responsibility Role clarity	Age Length of service Similarity of job with vocational interests Personal characteristics Family size and responsibility

Figure 3. Factors Impacting Upon Employee Turnover [Porter and Steers, 1973]

James L. Price, in The Study of Turnover, "presents codifications of the literature about organizational turnover .... an orderly and compact arrangement of substantive findings and/or procedures." [Price, 1977, p.3] His concise work defines correlates, determinants, and intervening variables of turnover. Correlates are "indicators" as opposed to determinants which are "causal," while intervening variables "influence" turnover and appear to intervene between the determinants and turnover. [Price, 1977, pp. 24,79]

The primary correlates of turnovers are length of service, age, and the general level of employment. Workers with longer periods of service have less turnover than those with shorter periods of service. Older employees quit their jobs less frequently. Higher rates of turnover occur when the economy is healthy and full employment is enjoyed than when the economy is depressed. [Price, 1977]

Determinants produce turnover. These are pay, integration, communications, and centralization. Thus more pay will reduce turnover, but this should be distinguished from satisfaction with pay. Integration is Price's term for personal relationships on the job. If employees are good mutual friends, and their work groups are cohesive, there is high integration and usually less turnover. Three kinds of organizational communications are discussed. Instrumental communications apply to the job or task alone and increase the employee's awareness of what he is supposed to do. They are "directly related to role performance." [Price, 1977, p. 75] Communication which is not pertaining to the job, is expressive communication such as gossip. Price asserts that expressive communication does not affect job turnover. Official communication is formal. Greater retention rates should result from increased formal and instrumental communications. [Price, 1977] Price defines centralization as "the degree to which power is concentrated." [Price, 1977, p. 76] If there is a high degree of centralization, workers are less autonomous, have less control, and participate less in decision making. Turnover will likely be greater where centralization is higher.

Satisfaction and opportunity are intervening variables. Satisfaction, made up of the five determinants, as shown in Figure 4, may be related to turnover but not necessarily. Opportunity, and the availability of alternatives, must normally be perceived as available by the employee who is quitting.

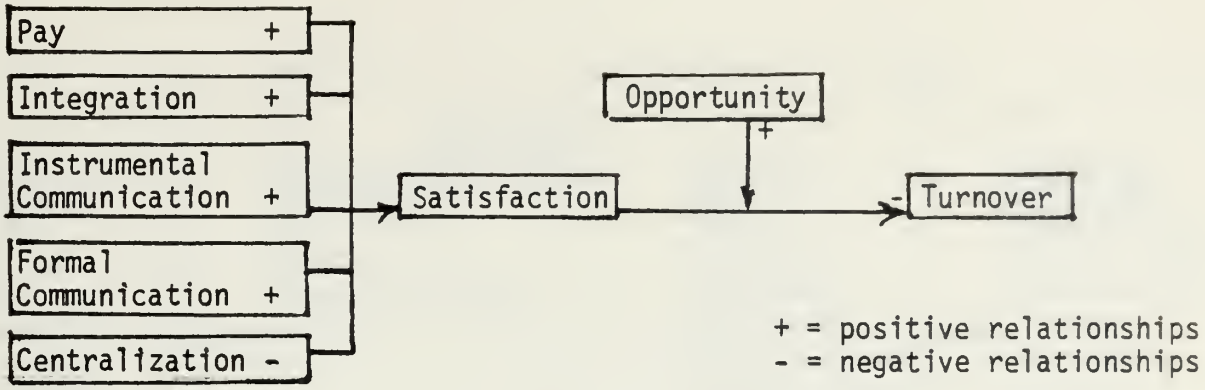

Figure 4. Relationships between the determinants, intervening variables, and turnover. [Price, 1977, p. 84]

A recent review of the literature pertaining to job turnover was completed by William H. Mobley, Rodger W. Griffeth, Herbert H. Hand, and Bruce M. Meglino. Titled the "Employee Turnover Process," it relies heavily upon the earlier work by Porter and Steers. The authors develop a useful conceptual framework for grasping the totality of the turnover process, evolving from organizational, environmental, and individual channels. [See Figure 5] The importance of factors external to the job itself, such as the state of the labor market, is emphasized. Although it might be considered naturally intuitive and obvious, the authors also point out the critical nature of intentions, stating that they may be more related to actual turnover than job satisfaction alone. [Mobley et al, 1977]

F. SUMMARY

Turnover, job withdrawal or resignation, and its opposite, retention, have received much attention from the academic, business, and military communities. The causes of turnover are complex, but an alert, well-managed organization will strive to reduce their effects if it is interested in retaining qualified and experienced personnel.

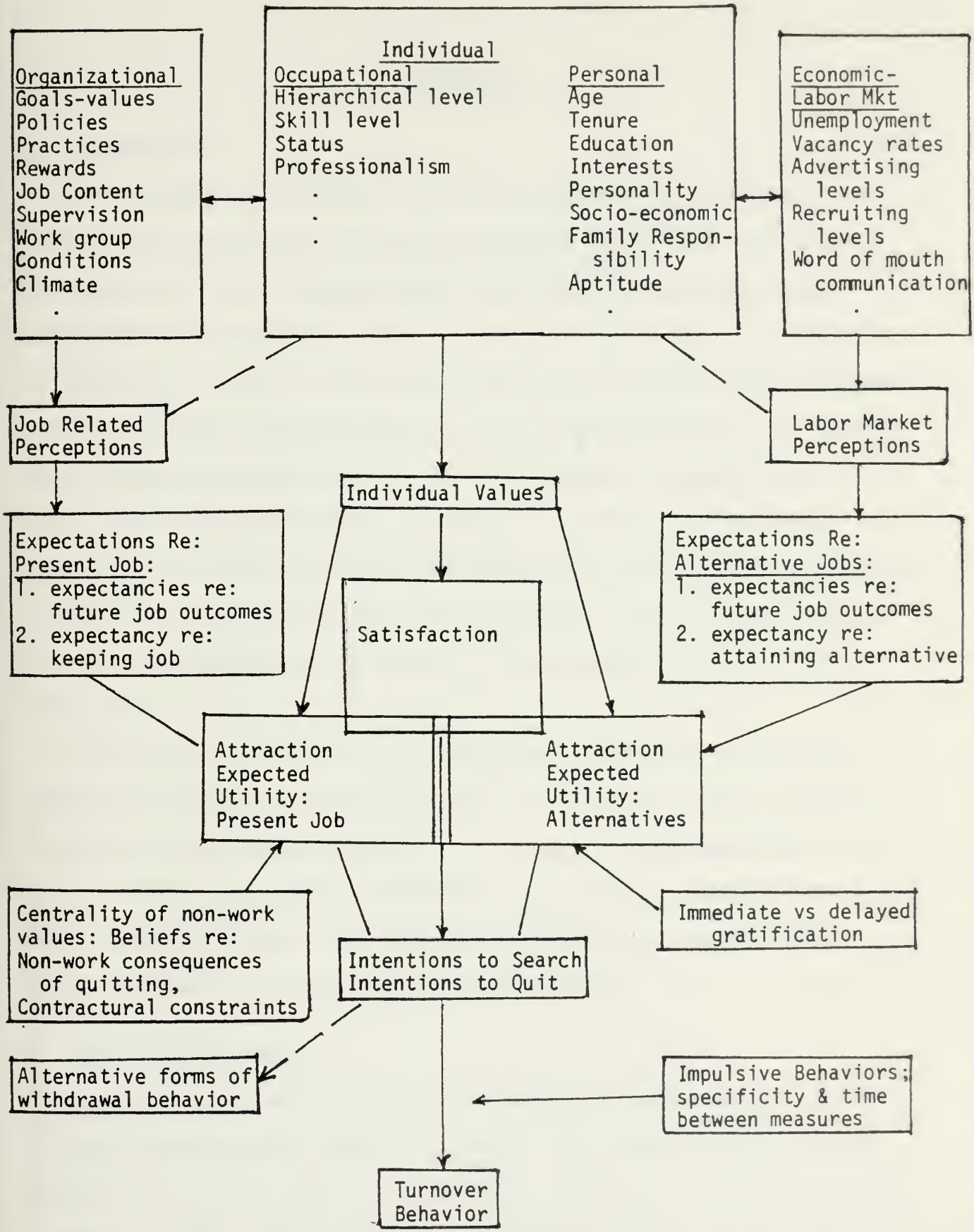

Figure 5. A Conceptual Model of Employee Turnover [Mobley et al, 1977, p. 34]

III. METHODOLOGY

A. INTRODUCTION

This research was conducted as part of a Coast Guard wide study of enlisted personnel retention currently in progress at Stanford University. The research for this thesis was done in collaboration with the work of Kerry Patterson at Stanford.

The original scope of this research effort was to define those characteristics and sources of dissatisfaction in the services which cause first and second class petty officers (E-5's and E-6's) to leave the Coast Guard at the end of their second enlistments. Individuals leaving at the end of their second enlistments are sacrificing an eight-year career investment, and therefore face a serious decision problem. Conversely, a goal of this study was to learn what factors are convincing enlisted personnel to remain in the Coast Guard.

The project was carried out in two stages. Questionnaires were prepared and distributed in the first stage. In the second stage, a portion of the target population was personally interviewed. Questionnaires were used in an attempt to canvass the entire target population in selected Coast Guard commands and areas. Interviews were conducted to substantiate and amplify information obtained from the questionnaires.

B. POPULATION SELECTION

Originally, the population was to be defined by two variables: first, the individual questioned should be in his or her second enlistment, and second, the individual would be either a first or second class petty officer. Personnel in their second enlistment were selected because of recent service awareness of the greatly reduced retention rates of second term personnel.

(Commandant's Notice 1160, 1978) Until recently, second termers were safely considered career motivated and likely to remain in the Coast Guard for twenty years. Furthermore, a study of enlisted men with five to ten years service would prove highly illuminating since these personnel had reenlisted once, but were now leaving the service at apparently increasing rates. Presumedly they had at one point to some degree accepted organizational goals and policies, and/or found their jobs worthwhile. What had changed their intentions during their second enlistments? First or second class petty officers (E-5's or E-6's) were chosen because it was assumed that the great majority would be in their second or subsequent enlistment. This assumption was later proven wrong as at least one-third of the respondents proved to be in their first enlistments.

The research was discussed with the study group at Stanford and with the Commandant's G-PE staff at Washington, D.C. It was decided to survey and interview personnel only in the Twelfth Coast Guard District in the San Francisco area in order to reduce duplication of the Stanford study. The San Francisco area was ideal because of its proximity to the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, and the availability of all types of Coast Guard units in the San Francisco area. These included high endurance cutters (WHEC), a medium endurance cutter (WMEC), a buoy tender (WLB), patrol boats (WPB), large and small search and rescue small boat stations, a large Group office, a Vessel Traffic System (VTS), a Marine Safety Office (MSO), an air station, and the district office.

When data from the questionnaires and interviews in San Francisco were collected and analyzed, it was learned that a primarily stated reason for termination was inadequate pay and benefits. A check of Department of Labor statistics revealed that San Francisco was ranked with the highest cost of living in the continental United States for the salary level of E-5's and

E-6's. [U.S. Department of Labor News Release, 29 April 1979] In an effort to determine if the cost of living of the area influenced the results of the survey, a second area of the country was selected in which the cost of living was lower. The least expensive area for a lower budget household, corresponding to E-5 and E-6 pay, was Austin, Texas, with Dallas and Houston ranking sixth and eighth respectively from the bottom. [U.S. Department of Labor News Release, 29 April, 1979] Therefore, Coast Guard units in southern Texas, part of the 8th Coast Guard District, were chosen for an additional survey effort. Although no WHEC's were located there, this area is also home for a large variety of Coast Guard commands.

It had been assumed that most E-5's and E-6's who received questionnaires would be in their second enlistments. With this in mind, mailing labels for all first and second class petty officers in San Francisco and southern Texas areas were obtained from Coast Guard headquarters. Analysis of the returned questionnaires from the San Francisco area indicated that only approximately fifty per cent of the E-5 and E-6 population was in a second enlistment. One-third were in their first enlistment. It was therefore decided to expand the analysis to include all E-5's and E-6's. In summary, the target population for this research effort ultimately comprised all first and second class petty officers (E-5's and E-6's) in the San Francisco and southern Texas areas.

C. QUESTIONNAIRE

Printed questionnaires, developed by the authors, were the primary means of data collection. Questionnaires were divided into four parts: demographic data (including enlistment intentions), intrinsic/extrinsic job satisfaction factors (as in the Herzberg model of what constitutes employee motivation), other specific items which might influence a career

decision, and a section which would allow respondents to expound upon these issues in their own words. [Appendix 1 is a sample questionnaire.]

In the demographic section, respondents were asked to provide their future enlistment intentions, rank, rate, type of unit, and whether or not it had been one of their top three choices, years and months of service in the Coast Guard, total time military service, present enlistment, age, sex, marital status, and race.

The second part of the questionnaire was divided into three sections, designed to determine why respondents were leaving or staying in the Coast Guard. It also allowed the respondents to indicate what factors were troubling them even if they were staying in, and what factors would cause them to regret their decision if they were getting out of the service.

The first section contained sixteen items identified by the authors as causes of dissatisfaction leading to a desire to leave the Coast Guard. Respondents were asked to rate each factor with respect to its importance in their decision making process. The scale used ranged from 1 to 7, "No Extent" to "Great Extent."

The second section contained seventeen items identified by the authors as positive factors of service life which might cause enlisted personnel to desire a Coast Guard career. Again respondents were asked to rate each factor with respect to its importance in reaching their decision to stay in or, if getting out, how much it caused them to regret their decision. The same rating scale was used.

The third section of the second part asked the respondents to list in order the three most important items from the first two sections which influenced their decision. Next they were asked to list the three least considered items, i.e. factors which had the least bearing on their decisions.

The third part of the questionnaire was composed of items which were thought to have direct impact on the average individual's career decision. Had the respondent received a civilian job offer? How important was the influence of the spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend to the decision-maker? Did the respondent feel job or location were more important? The respondent was also asked to list his or her least preferred and most preferred Coast Guard districts. This could then be compared with the serviceman's present assignment. Finally, the respondent was asked to indicate how greatly the separation between officers and enlisted in such things as pay and privileges affected his or her career intentions.

In the fourth part of the questionnaire, respondents were given most of a blank page and invited to use additional sheets as necessary to state in their own words what changes they would make in the Coast Guard to improve the organization.

Pilot questionnaires were tested at Coast Guard Group Monterey. The questionnaires were administered by the investigators to test for clarity and understanding of both questions and instructions. Since the questionnaires would be mailed to the target population with no immediate opportunity for respondents to ask questions, the pilot questionnaires were administered without verbal directions. Upon completion, however, respondents were interviewed at once for suggestions for improvement. Time to complete the pilot questionnaires was observed to be forty-five minutes to an hour. The questionnaires were amended as necessary and printed for distribution.

The questionnaires were mailed to personnel in the San Francisco and southern Texas areas, three hundred and fifty-two (352) to San Francisco on 14 May 1979 and three hundred and one (301) to southern Texas units on 3 and 6 July 1979. San Francisco questionnaires were mailed to the units, except

for District office personnel, with a cover letter from the District Chief of Staff asking the commands to administer the questionnaires to all E-5's and E-6's at their units. District office personnel received their questionnaires by personal mail. The questionnaires for the 8th District personnel in southern Texas were mailed directly to the individuals. The survey was made through the commands in the 12th District to follow the chain of command and to acquaint unit CO/XO's with the purpose of the study prior to the arrival of the authors in the San Francisco area to conduct interviews. Direct mailings were accomplished in the subsequent survey of southern Texas personnel to learn if an appreciable difference in the response rate would result.

Questionnaires were received through 27 July. The response rate from San Francisco (12th District) was 42.6%, from the southern Texas area (8th District) 37.9%, for an overall return rate of 40.4%. Statistical analysis and some correlation analysis by computer was then performed.

D. INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted in the San Francisco area by the authors. Personnel selected and available for the interview were first or second class petty officers in their second Coast Guard enlistment. The interviews were carried out at the interviewee's unit in or near his or her own work space when possible, alone in complete privacy, and with confidentiality assured. The purpose of the interviews was to supplement, amplify, confirm and correct if necessary the impressions of the target population obtained from the questionnaires. The interviews allowed selected respondents to express how the issues raised by the questionnaires affected them personally. An attempt was made to interview personnel from a variety of unit types and representative rates. Interviews were conducted at the 12th District office,

an air station, a group office, and aboard a WHEC, a WMEC, a WLB, and WPB's. The rates interviewed included QM, RM, BM, MK, ET, YN, SK, GM, and aviation rates.

Thirty-three interviews were made, each averaging an hour in duration. Since there were two interviewers, an attempt to standardize the format and content of the interviews was made using the following outline:

Demographic data: age, rank, rate, sex, race, unit, marital status, time in Coast Guard, and total military service.

Questions:
1. Why did you reenlist upon completion of first four years?
2. Will you reenlist again? Why?
3. How important is the geographic area to your decision to stay in or get out?
4. Have you received a civilian job offer?
5. Has your spouse or girlfriend/boyfriend influenced your decision?
6. Does the separation between officers and enlisted affect your reenlistment intentions?
7. What changes would you make in the Coast Guard to keep you in the service or make it a better place to work?

The purpose of the interview outline used was not necessarily to extract specific answers for each question, but to facilitate the interview and guide the interviewee into different areas of discussion. The interviewers also fully explained the purposeof their research effort and that anonymity was guaranteed. Notes were taken during the interviews and at their conclusion a summarization of relevant points and impressions were immediately taped by the interviewers. Subjects were invited to read the notes and/or

hear the taped summary of the interview. Tapes were later transcribed and content analysis performed.

E. SUMMARY

In order to develop an understanding of what was affecting the reenlistment intentions of experienced petty officers in the Coast Guard, questionnaires and interviews were used. Personnel in both a high-cost and a low-cost area were mailed detailed questionnaires. Demographic data, job satisfaction measures, and specific questions pertaining to other variables thought to have some bearing on career decisions, were contained in the questionnaires. Interviews were conducted in the high-cost area.

IV. RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS

A. INTRODUCTION

In the results section a complete description of the respondents' demographic data, answers to the questionnaires, and the results of the interviews are provided. Additional breakdowns of the data are made by reenlistment intentions, types of duty, enlistment status, and districts (8th or 12th Coast Guard District). The results of these statistical analyses will be explained. Appendix 1 is a sample questionnaire used as the primary survey instrument.

B. QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Description of Surveyed population

More than forty per cent of the questionnaires were returned. Two hundred sixty-four questionnaires were suitable for study, one hundred fourteen from the 8th District units in the south Texas area, and one hundred fifty from the 12th District units in the San Francisco area. Forty-five per cent of the respondents were second class petty officers (E-5's). The remainder were first class petty officers (E-6's). Twenty-four different ratings were represented. As expected, most responses came from personnel in the largest occupational specialties as shown below:

Specialty	Return Rate
Boatswain Mate (BM)	17.4%
Machinist Mate (MK)	12.1%
Aviation Rates (AT, AD, AM, ASM, AE)	12.0%
Quartermaster (QM)	8.0%
Yeoman (YN)	8.0%
Radioman (RM)	6.8%
Electronics Technician (ET, ETN)	6.5%

(A complete listing of the ratings responding to the questionnaire is provided in Appendix 2)

Questionnaire responses were received from a great variety of Coast Guard units: twenty-seven per cent of the total number of returns came from cutters, fifty-seven percent from shore billets, and sixteen per cent from air stations. (Please see Appendix 3 for a complete tabularization.)

a. Duty assignment:

More than one-third of the respondents indicated that their present duty assignment was not one of their first three choices. Stated differently, more than sixty per cent of the petty officers, who replied to the questionnaires, indicated that their present duty station was one of their first three choices. Differences between the Districts on this question were less than ten per cent. While these data do little to explain reenlistment intentions or job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, they do indicate that a majority of the respondents were located at a unit or in an area of their choice.

b. Enlistment:

Approximately one-third of the respondents (all E-5's and E-6's) were in their first enlistment. Almost fifty per cent were in their second Coast Guard enlistment and the remainder were in their third or subsequent Coast Guard enlistment. This would seem to indicate, that at least for this population, there is considerable opportunity in the service for advancement to a senior petty officer position during the first four years of a Coast Guardsman's career.

c. Age:

The average age of a respondent was 26.5 years. Ages were broken down as follows:

20-24 years (incl.)	34%
25-28 years	26.9%
29-32 years	22.1%
33-and over	17.0%

d. Sex:

Respondents were overwhelmingly male Coast Guardsmen. Of 264, only six were women.

e. Marital status and race:

More than sixty per cent of the population were married. Eighty-four per cent were white. (For a complete racial breakdown, please refer to Appendix 4.)

f. Reenlistment intentions:

Respondents were almost evenly divided in their answer to item number six of the questionnaire, which asked for a statement of reenlistment intentions in one of four available options. These results are shown below:

Reenlistment Intentions	8th District Percentage	12th District Percentage	Combined Percentage	
Definitely staying in	25.0	21.9	23.0	
Leaning towards staying in	23.0	27.8	25.8	= 48.8
Leaning towards getting out	19.6	26.5	23.9	
Definitely getting out	32.1	23.8	27.3	= 51.2
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

However, in the 8th District those considering leaving the service had a much greater tendency to indicate they were definitely getting out. The near fifty/fifty split obtained by combining the four options into two was maintained in the 8th District.

2. Responses to Questions (7) - (16) of the Questionnaire

Question (7) listed causes of dissatisfaction with service life. A scale was provided for the respondent to indicate to what extent the sixteen items listed affected his decision to withdraw from the Coast Guard, or, if the respondent was reenlisting, to what extent the factors annoyed or troubled him. The example used to illustrate how to answer the question is shown below:

EXAMPLE:

	No extent						Great extent
Not enough liberty:	1	2	3	(4)	5	6	7

The example indicates that to some extent, not enough liberty influenced his decision to get out.

This allowed a ranking of the factors by mean response as shown below:

	QUESTION	Mean Response	Standard Deviation
1.	Shrinking benefits (7c)	5.81	1.52
2.	Not enough pay (7a)	5.59	1.62
3.	Poor leadership (7k)	4.34	1.96
4.	Poor quality of subordinates (7p)	4.14	2.06
5.	Poor retirement plan (7o)	3.65	2.14
6.	Detailers (7f)	3.58	2.14
7.	Seldom recognized by officers and chiefs for work well done (7e)	3.37	1.94
8.	Too much duty (7j)	3.34	2.03
9.	Poor feelings of accomplishment on the job (7g)	3.03	1.98
10.	Transfers too frequent (7d)	2.90	1.95
11.	Poor recognition from public (7b)	2.79	1.84
12.	Boring work (7i)	2.69	1.83
13.	Promotions are too slow (7n)	2.45	1.87
14.	Job seems meaningless (7l)	2.42	1.25
15.	Coast Guard missions (7h)	2.40	1.77
16.	My wife and family aren't proud of my work (7m)	1.78	1.51

It is apparent that a perception of inadequate pay and benefits is the leading cause of dissatisfaction amongst surveyed E-5's and E-6's. The next most likely factor to receive a high score was poor leadership followed by a concern for the quality of subordinates.

Question (8) listed a positive version of most of the factors named in question (7) in an attempt to discern those service characteristics which led to satisfaction and retention. This facilitated a ranking of positive

factors by mean response as shown below:

	QUESTION	Mean Response	Standard Deviation
1.	Good job security (8q)	4.97	1.97
2.	Pride in Coast Guard missions (8i)	4.74	1.76
3.	Interesting work (8j)	4.42	1.85
4.	Meaningful work (8l)	4.34	1.79
5.	Feelings of accomplishment on the job (8h)	4.02	1.99
6.	Good travel opportunities (8e)	3.94	1.97
7.	Rapid and steady promotions (8n)	3.78	1.82
8.	Work my wife and family can be proud of (8m)	3.56	2.09
9.	Good retirement plan (8d)	3.55	2.05
10.	The public recognizes that the CG is an outstanding service (8b)	3.31	1.74
11.	Good leadership (8o)	3.01	1.83
12.	Work is frequently praised and recognized when well done (8f)	2.90	1.68
13.	Lots of time off (8k)	2.85	1.78
14.	Good benefits (8c)	2.69	1.73
15.	High quality of subordinates (8p)	2.64	1.76
16.	Detailers (8g)	2.39	1.64
17.	Good pay (8a)	2.22	1.71

While good job security heads the list, it is noteworthy that the next four items pertain to the inherent qualities of the individual's job. It may be observed that the work assignment, the rate, and the job itself are attractive to the surveyed petty officers.

It is interesting to compare the rankings obtained from questions (7) and (8). It might be said that the majority of the surveyed petty officers enjoy their jobs and rates, but are extremely disgruntled by their compensation, and to a lesser extent concerned about the quality of their leaders and subordinates. In general, the results of question (8) do validate those of question (7), and vice versa. Furthermore, an easily perceptible spread of mean responses was realized.

Question number (9) was an attempt to force the respondent to list those factors from questions (7) and (8), positive or negative, which were instrumental in his decision to remain or leave the service. Results were essentially identical to the ranking of the factors of questions (7) and (8)

above. (Appendix 5 provides a presentation of the top five items mentioned in each of the three most important.)

In question (10), surveyed petty officers were asked to list those factors from questions (7) and (8) which had no bearing on their enlistment decision. Participants were cautioned not to list positive factors, but those that were simply not considered. This was a difficult question and in retrospect marginally useful. However, it did show that the respondents were least affected by strictly externally environmental factors such as public recognition of the Coast Guard. (See Appendix 6)

The results of question (11) were also disappointing. It was an effort to obtain some idea of the effect of private industry's recruiting amongst petty officers, and to determine how many of the surveyed personnel leaving the service actually had firm job opportunities elsewhere. Although the question was not uniformly understood, it is evident that approximately forty-four per cent of those personnel leaving the service claimed they had received a civilian job offer. About the same percentage of those remaining in the service had received a civilian job offer. Apparently half of the job offers resulted from unsolicited recruiting and half from individual job seeking. Results were inadequate, however, due to the construction of the question and to some respondents the threatening nature of the question. Several indicated that the question was inappropriate.

Question (12) endeavored to gauge the influence of the respondent's spouse on his or her decision to reenlist. The response was again recorded on a scale ranging from one to seven, with a "7" meaning that the respondent had been greatly influenced by his or her spouse in arriving at a reenlistment decision. A "not applicable" option in answering this question was also provided. Of the two hundred and sixty-four respondents, forty-nine checked

not applicable. The mean response of those who use the scale was 4.46 with a standard deviation of 2.24.

The results of question (13) were clear. To the question "what is more important to you, your job or your location," more than seventy per cent of the respondents replied that both were equally important. Twelve per cent said the job was more important, and the remainder felt that location was most important.

Respondents were asked to indicate their most preferred and least preferred districts in question (14). 12th District (San Francisco) personnel showed a liking for west coast districts. 8th District (southern Texas) personnel preferred either the 7th District (Florida, Georgia, South Carolina) or the 8th District which also included Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. A strong interst in the 13th District (Washington and Oregon) was also shown. It is interesting to note that thirty-six per cent of 12th District petty officers surveyed said their most preferred district was the 12th and that almost one-third of the 8th District personnel indicated that their district was most preferred. The least preferred Districts were the 1st and 3rd Districts which include the northeastern states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. (Appendix 7 provides a listing of districts by choice.)

In question (15) respondents were asked to state on a scale ranging from one to seven the extent to which the separation between officers and enlisted men affected their career decision. A response of "7" would indicate that this had great impact upon their decision. The mean score for the answer was 4.04 with a standard deviation of 2.37. The separation between officers and enlisted men was also addressed in question (16). Respondents were asked if they would have a greater tendency to remain in the Coast Guard or consider service life improved, if there were less

differences between officers and enlisted men. Question (16) was not answered by six per cent of the respondents. Sixty per cent of those who answered did so affirmatively while the remainder replied negatively. While this does not represent an overwhelming indictment of the two-class system, officers/enlisted personnel, in the Coast Guard, it does demonstrate that more than half of the respondents were not happy with the current distinctions between officers and themselves (all respondents were enlisted personnel).

3. Responses to Questions (17) and (18) of the Questionnaire

Questions (17) and (18) were designed to solicit original comments and ideas from the respondents. As might be expected, those who took the time to complete the questionnaire were often less than parsimonious with their comments. Most pulled no punches, were very pointed in their observations, and often composed a tirade of perceived injustices as well as a whole pot-pourri of suggestions, complaints, and sentiments. Of course, several answers to questions (17) and (18) were perfunctory at best, but seventy-three (more than twenty-five per cent) petty officers felt strongly enough about their comments to sign them.

The comments section was very useful in raising issues not mentioned in the questionnaire. This section also augmented the results of the personal interviews by providing additional substance and character to a dry questionnaire. While pay, benefits, leadership, and the quality of subordinates were most often reiterated as current and pressing problems, strong feelings were also expressed on a variety of other subjects.

These included a frequently stated belief that the Coast Guard's disciplinary system was weakening to the detriment of morale, effectiveness, and pride in the service. Discussion of military discipline was often related to the issues of bad leadership, poor subordinates, and the loss of

respect for senior petty officers. Given the average age of the respondents, twenty-six, it was surprising to see the numerous comments calling for a return to the "old guard" way of things, in discipline, uniforms, and more rigorous training and promotion policies.

Several particularly strident observations were made concerning the differences between married and single servicemen's pay and benefits. Other features of the military pay system, not concerned necessarily with the actual amount of compensation, but with its fairness, were assailed as well. Perceived inequities in the flight pay variations between officers and enlisted men, reenlistment bonus policies, inadequacy of "so-called" sea pay, housing and ration allowances, were all addressed.

Other issues mentioned were grooming standards, minorities, quality of life aboard ship, and of course the quality of food aboard ship or at a shore station. Some men called for making the Coast Guard a civil service, others said the service should stress its military aspects more.

Not all comments were negative. Several men and women wrote of a great admiration for the Coast Guard and were very much pleased with their own jobs. However, they were forced to balance these positive feelings against the perception that their compensation was not commensurate with their degree of responsibility, their skill level, or in comparison to their civilian counterparts. But more than that, many of the petty officers answering the comments section of the questionnaire, believed their pay was declining so rapidly in the face of inflation that they could no longer properly provide for their familites. Often, the expressed result of this perceived unfairness was an unhappiness about staying in if committed or a readiness to leave the service at the first opportunity. In addition, the discontent with pay and benefits was often associated with a belief that the Coast Guard's senior leadership was failing to do enough about it, or worse, was not even aware

of the financial plight of the service's enlisted men. Unfortunately this dissatisfaction seemed to be translated to all levels of Coast Guard leadership.

The remainder of this section contains direct quotes from the comments in order to provide the reader with a true flavor of the frustrations and thoughts of the surveyed petty officers. First a table presenting a compilation of the frequency of comments by subject and district is provided:

SUBJECT	DISTRICT 12th	DISTRICT 8th	TOTAL NUMBER OF COMMENTS
Pay	65	61	126
Benefits	35	54	89
Discipline and subordinates	45	21	66
Leadership	32	24	56
USCG needs more funds, resources	26	29	54
Training	24	22	46
Married/Single differences	24	12	36
Grooming standards	6	18	24
USCG should be a civil service	9	14	23
Uniforms	10	11	22
EM deserve more respect and authority	10	5	15
Minorities unfairly favored	6	3	9

Pay and Benefits

> Better pay and benefits would improve the calibre of Coast Guard personnel. With 13% inflation and 5.5% pay increases, I don't see how Admiral Stewart could expect any intelligent man with a family to reenlist. Without reenlistments the Coast Guard will be, and in some cases already is, functioning with poorly trained personnel who are not qualified to perform Coast Guard missions.

> Though I am an E-6 QM with training in navigation, communications, ship handling, and have a knowledge of supply and personnel matters, I could make more money and receive better benefits as a deckhand on a civilian vessel.

> I'm XPO of a WPB, a five-million-dollar craft, and responsible when underway for 8 to 10 men not to mention any civilians I may have to tow in. I've been on a WLB as a BM1. I ran the buoy deck. A civilian job like that would pay me at least twice as much if not more. I like the Coast Guard. I enjoy my job, I've never had in my opinion, bad duty. I'm just sick and tired of fighting this inflation and 5% pay raises. I <u>just</u> keep my head above water.

There is no reason that we should suffer under a poverty pay rate. Because of the pay situation we have to live as second class citizens and the public looks at us that way until we go out in the middle of the night to tow them in or save their boat from sinking. The line about pay is tied to law is bunk. The Commandant isn't even trying to fight for a meaningful pay raise.

I have virtually no benefits. Relief should be furnished to Coast Guardsmen transferred to resort areas with no major military bases nearby. We have to purchase our food and health needs from commercial sources...prices are going out of sight.

Another problem concerning the members of the Coast Guard is the quality of the medical and dental services we receive. Our medical and dental are free, but usually of low quality and put on a low priority of the physicians. Many times the members suffer from the lack of proper attention, to unnecessary treatments so certain physicians can "make a buck" off the government...

Make sea pay more in line with flight status pay.

Define the SRB program. (Selective Reenlistment Bonus)

I would like the pay system overhauled. The existing system has become too complex with many additions just added on... BAQ without dependents should be a set percentage of BAQ with dependents for all personnel. My BAQ pays less than half of my apartment rent in Daly City for one bedroom. I don't expect my BAQ to pay for all the rent, but all personnel should at least get an equal percentage for fairness. When I'm on leave I am checked for the difference between BAS and LVRATS. It isn't much, but I can't understand why I should be penalized for going on leave either... I would attempt to initiate action to modernize the pay system and stabilize benefits to the maximum extent possible.

Reinstate the GI Bill. They must be used by 1989 or we lose them. If I stay in 20 years, I lose them. I will be getting out in 1982 with 10 years service. I can use GI benefits while still in the service, but I want to go to school full time.

I find it hard to consider my pay equal to civilian industry. In the outside world both my pay and benefits would be better. In the past I stayed in because of job satisfaction, but recently I have considered taking a second job just to feed my family... I can't afford to stay in.

Also over the last few years Congress has been monkeying around with the idea of revising the retirement benefits (mostly downward) to the point you can't help but wonder what they will be a few years from now. I have heard over and over again "there's no future in it," from men getting out, from seaman to 1st class petty officers. I believe this to be the most basic problem. I still believe in the Guard as strongly as I ever did, I enjoy and take pride in my work. If I have to get out, I will do so regretfully. But when I can no longer provide a decent living for my family, that is when I must get out. Every year of such things as 5.5% pay caps when inflation ranges from 8.5-13% brings that day a little closer.

Tell Mr. Aspen and Mr. Brown that me and my feet are voting.

Discipline and subordinates

Try to reverse the trend toward relaxed discipline and the feeling that "the Guard is a military service ... sort of." No one can take pride in an outfit that is run like a volunteer fire department nor can it be truly efficient when run on that basis. Yet in recent years I have noticed increasing instances of repeated insubordination that are met with a suspended sentence. In other words a leadership problem.

The military discipline system should be strictly adhered to with no exceptions. I have seen many people get away with too much, and when they are finally punished it is because someone got hurt.

I see a lot of the "bad apples" breaking regulations and getting off lightly and this gives the man who works hard a "If he gets away with it, why can't I?" attitude.

Give general discharges to all personnel who are discharged early for misconduct or incompetency. Honorable discharges have been cheapened to the point they are meaningless.

Drop quotas for recruiters in favor of quality.

Raise entrance exam requirements. Insure senior personnel enforce the UCMJ and related regulations or have the regulations changed to a more relaxed attitude. I sincerely believe that discipline in the Coast Guard is at an all time low. This is very depressing for petty officers who truly attempt to enforce our regulations but who get no backing and as a result, end up appearing the fool.

The policy on recruiting. It appears to me that recruiters accept any warm body to fill their quotas. This is not cost-effective. I believe standards should be held firm and high. The Coast Guard always seems to get the job done and what good is an individual who can't even meet the minimum standards of acceptance into the Coast Guard but manages to get in due to some recruiter's quota demands... The new PMIS (Personnel Management Information System) is not being maintained properly due to the fact that a number of Yeomen are either incapable of following the simplest instructions or just too stupid to figure something out without constant supervision. And we are making these people second and first class PO's!!!! The quality of today's Coastie stinks. And you sit there and wonder why the petty officer with 8, 10, and 12 years in are getting out.... So who does the job, the career 1st and CPO. Keep the standards high and let's stop promoting people without exams.

Leadership

In my limited observation, I identify reenlistment rates on a given unit to be directly proportional to the overall quality of leadership displayed. I have heard countless times from people getting out "No matter where I go in the Coast Guard, I'll find a Chief Smith, or CDR Jones, so I'm getting out." They are referring to an obvious lack of professionalism, in terms of both technical knowledge and leadership qualities, in their superiors. I see the majority of officers and SPO's as above average in comparison with the other military services, but there are enough exceptions to adversely affect morale.

The current new officers are on the loose side, they try to be your "buddy" and not your leader.

Leadership in the Coast Guard is a problem. There are E-4's, E-5's, and E-6's but where have the petty officers gone.

Improve communications between officer and enlisted personnel. Lower the pedestal some officers put themselves on. One officer I know said "why should I believe anything a third class says."

Hit Academy officers with more awareness of enlisteds.

Change the attitude of junior officers; that they are always right. Junior officers are assigned to learn just as enlisted, not play king.

Most people believe that those in command in Washington are no better than the Congress they work with. They only care about their own positions and keeping them. The Commandant is concerned with

running the service along with his staff to the best of its ability regardless of effects on personnel. It is no secret and now obvious that the individual has been neglected. I believe someone said if the military (people) didn't like the situation they "could vote with their feet!" Looks like a lot of votes.

Put some enlisted people in Washington and listen to them. They are the ones who know what's going on in the field, not the people who have been there (Washington) for years. Keep them in D.C. for a few months TAD and HEAR THEM OUT!!

I would push for more people, increase flight pay, basic pay, cost of living allowances, new modern equipment, new aircraft, (the new helo's will help,) get back the dependents' benefits, and let personnel know what is being done towards these goals.

One complaint I have is a lot of the Ensigns fresh from the Academy. They are often put in charge of a department and rather than trying to learn what is going on, they try to change everything and tell senior Petty Officers how to do their job. The Petty Officers may have been working in their rate anywhere from 1-20 years, but that Ensign has been to the Academy for four years, and by God, he knows what is going on.

USCG needs more funds and resources

Get us out of doing the best by making do with the worst. Modern equipment (aircraft) and tools, avionics, test gear, ships, small boats...twenty-five year old aircraft don't fulfill "Semper Paratus." Waiting to hear which base has lost the next plane doesn't make one eager to stand ready crew duty. Tell Congress we need upgrading now for law enforcement, pollution, and fisheries patrol, not just, yes sir, we'll do it.

Start a dirigible or blimp program where not only aviation personnel can participate. These "ships" served as an effective tool for ASW in World War II and can easily be adapted for law enforcement, SAR, ATON. They combine the speed of aircraft with the on-scene capabilities of ships. This is one program I would stay in the Coast Guard for. Commission a small fleet of six-bitters updated to today's needs with hulls like the 327 for good sea keeping abilities and speed. These together with a 150-foot corvette type WPB would replace the top-heavy 82's and aging 95's. Low profiles with a good armament for combating the drug traffic and providing a true fighting force in time of conflict. Update the 180' buoy tender. They are getting so old that you have to cannibalize one to fix another.

Go to the Hill and fight for more money for the Coast Guard. It seems like tradition dictates that we get less each year, and more jobs to do with it. The old cliche we can do it sir, is bull. We can't. More

planes, more small boats and more money with each new task, and then we can do it. What is the Commandant afraid of, those senators and congressmen work for us, we don't work for them.

Modernization of surface/aviation forces would be required to maintain a force of ships and planes that are not continuously being patched up due to extreme age. This would also extend to office equipment which is nearly impossible to replace in this office due to budget restraints. It's hard to have a pay record transition when our typewriters and calculators keep falling apart even after being repaired. (We can't throw them out, because we can't get replacements.)

As Congress broadens our horizons I would add more eyes to see with.

Training

Allow for more training to be available to enlisted personnel, if only on a "unit training" basis. This would stimulate more interest in the job done. One good thing would be to make leadership training more available for personnel below E-6, as in the CG reserve.

Boot camp training is so lax compared to years ago. Rough training will produce more disciplined recruits. Change basic training procedures.

One of the most important changes or assistance that the Coast Guard could do to improve is the possibility that when a member of the Coast Guard rotates from a specialty back to general duty is to assist that person with a week or two week refresher course to update the man's knowledge in his rate. For instance, I am a YN1 in intelligence and when I rotate back to general duty I will have been out of my rate for four plus years and with the never-ending changes such as the PMIS manual I know that I will experience some difficulty in the performance of my rate....I feel very strongly that the Coast Guard needs a law enforcement rate. We have the responsibilities of law enforcement, however it seems to be of less importance to the Coast Guard than our other responsibilities. The lack of training and interest in this area makes the Coast Guard very sub-standard in the field.

Additional "B" and "C" schools made available to petty officers, and make the PO's available for the training.

Make a rating in the "M" field for personnel, like BM's, MK's, etc., who wish to stay in the "M" field, not an MST rating, but a rating where a person can board vessels, do inspections, pollution investigations, tank barge boardings, navigation inspections, etc.

Port security should become a regular rate and be the main stream for the Coast Guard law enforcement program. Police departments don't use administrators or maintenance personnel to patrol the streets. Its unprofessional, so why should we. And you can draw the same picture for all mission areas. We have got to get professionals in each mission area and leave them there. This is one reason people are getting out. They want to work in one area and the Guard won't let them. So they get out and work in the civilian equivalent.

Lengthen the period of boot camp, putting more focus on practical seamanship, signalling, Coast Guard missions, history, and jurisdiction, and pride in uniform.

Many young Coast Guardsmen are making rate too fast. Service wide exams should be required for all promotions.

I also think we have to overhaul the rating structure and assignment system to allow a person to specialize in one or two mission areas and move between missions only when the individual wants to do so. There are many areas to work in and its too much to be good in all of them. You can be an E-6 working with SAR for years and go to a buoy tender and be lost. The Guard isn't getting as much out of its training because you never get to work in one area long enough to be as good as you should be or would like to be... I would like to work in some form of Coast Guard law enforcement (all though I'm an MK) for the rest of my time in but when the detailer looks at my wishcard he doesn't take into account any of the LE training I have had. They'll send me to some new type of job and I'll have to start all over. It seems like a waste of Coast Guard training money...

Married/Single Differences

Equal pay for equal work.

... the difference in pay between the married members and my fellow bachelors and bachelorettes. Being attached to a S & Q station, I'm required to acquire public housing, as does my married counterpart. The differences in our allowances forces me to either move into lower priced housing, pay out of my own pocket for equivalent housing, or seek a spouse to boost my pay. None of these being desirable to me, I feel as though I'm being penalized for being single! I have no desire to "acquire" a wife for the sole purpose of receiving something rightfully mine.

Make life more equitable for singles. At my unit there are no barracks rooms available so regardless of our finances we must live off station. Singles and married people both receive subsistance and quarters allowance (S & Q) and we both pay the same rent generally. The married man then also receives an allowance for his wife and kids plus he is eligible for government leased housing. The single guy is... ?

While stationed on an HEC and broken down in the yards away from homeport an obscure rule was dredged up to the effect that "if in a yard away from the ship's homeport for more than 30 days then the Coast Guard must transport the married men back to their wives and families for a 96-hour period of liberty." Also for each succeeding 30-day period. In fairness my CO saw to it that some of the single guys got to go back and that we got at least as many days off as the married people did. But the point is why are there different rules and standards for the married and single members?

BAQ inequities—BAQ should be based on time in service rather than dependency. Full BAQ for everyone.

Grooming Standards

Why are all those CDR's and CAPT's so busy worrying about my hair? Hair and leadership—hair is so trite I hate to even write about it. Captains down to seamen seem to spend so much time complaining about it (too long, too short) ...

USCG should be a civil service

If I could I would make the Coast Guard a civil service. It is a good service, but take me; I'm a coxswain on small boats. The pay to get me to put my life in danger is not worth it. If this happened (we became a civil service) we could get better personnel and do a better job.

I believe the best solution to follow would be to eliminate the Coast Guard as a military entity. Convert the billets to GS equivalents and fill them by competitive selection.

Make Coast Guard aviation civil service.

Uniforms

This uniform has got to go. I have not met anyone who would admit they cared for the present uniform.

Switch back to the old Coast Guard uniform (bells and flat hat). With the new uniform, the public has mistaken me for a security guard, mailman, bus driver, air force.

Quit dilly-dallying with the work uniform. Make up your mind and lets have some affirmative action.

Blue work uniform is not readily available. There aren't enough new uniforms for the recruits to be properly outfitted. Suggest approval of commercially available substitutes to get all hands into similar clothing vice three different ones possible.

EM deserve more respect and authority

So I see one of the main reasons your senior E-5's and E-6's are leaving the service is that they have nothing to look forward to. Give the basic day-to-day running of the Coast Guard back to the chiefs and I think things might improve almost immediately.

Minorities unfairly favored

It is time to stop using the Coast Guard as an instrument of social experimentation. The last time the human relations representative visited the unit he openly admitted that minority races and females were allowed waivers several points greater than normally considered for admission to aviation schools, and we are having to live with the result in the field in the form of incompetence. There is no room for this, especially in aviation. When the day arrives that billets are filled on the basis of qualification and competence and race or sex are in no way factors, the Guard will be much the richer.

I would first acknowledge the fact that women are not men and do not want to be treated like men. Get them all off the floating units and small SAR stations.

Stop making exceptions for minorities and females... Too often I have seen minorities and females take advantage of the fact that they are what they are. Being a female, I have a special resentment for the females I have seen do this, as they give the rest of us a bad name, but that goes for the minorities too!

Some Positive Comments

The Coast Guard is a good outfit with fine traditions and a mission unique to the rest of the military. To re-affirm these traditions with a little "Old Guard" spirit can only help... I take pride in my work and the fact that I am a Coast Guardsman.

I love the Coast Guard. I feel that the CG is asked, too often, to make do with little or nothing. The Commandant has tried to get our finances increased but to no avail... I respect and admire the Commandant and I feel he will do all he can do to keep the Coast Guard efficient and forward-moving.

I believe the Coast Guard to be the finest military service in existence.

I realize we have big problems in the Guard. I can't understand why so many people hate the Guard. Sometimes one person can turn a man off to staying in, but the Guard, I feel, can improve many things herself. I have faith we can work out our problems but it will be hard!

I would get rid of all the people who moan and gripe all the time about how bad they have it in the USCG.

As a whole I feel that the Coast Guard has been a very good experience for me, and I am proud to say that I have been a part of it.

The Coast Guard has helped me. I'm going to get my 100-ton license and make anywhere from 50 to 100 dollars a day. I just hope if I get in trouble there will be somebody there to help me.

4. Breakdown of the Respondents into Different Groupings

To determine if there were any differences between the manner in which separate groupings of respondents answered the questionnaires, respondents were grouped into four different categories. These categories were (1) Eighth and Twelfth Coast Guard Districts; (2) reenlistment intentions; (3) present enlistment status; and (4) type of unit to which presently assigned. Analysis of variance was used to determine if the differences between the mean responses to each of the questions asked in the questionnaires were statistically significant. Where statistical significance occurred between the sample mean responses nonchance differences in attitudes between these groupings can be inferred. A significance level of the F test of .05 or less was used in testing the null hypothesis of no difference between the sample means. [Pfaffenberger and Patterson, 1977]

a. Breakdown by District.

The respondents were first categorized by the District in which they were stationed at the time of the survey. This was done to determine

if there were any differences in their stated reasons for leaving or being dissatisfied with the service which could be attributed to the different geographical areas. One hundred and fifty respondents were from the Twelfth District and one hundred and fourteen were from the Eighth District. The responses to five questions of the thirty-three on the questionnaire were found to be significantly different between districts. These questions were detailers, dissatisfaction with Coast Guard missions, good benefits, good job security, and the distinction between officers and enlisted men. [See Appendix 8 for the mean responses and statistical test of significance.] The interesting feature of the breakdown by district is not which questions were different, but rather those which were similar. The survey of units in the south Texas area (Eighth Coast Guard District) was accomplished primarily to see if there would be differences in the responses to pay and benefits from the personnel in the San Francisco area (Twelfth Coast Guard District). Labor department statistics indicated that San Francisco was much more expensive than the southern Texas area. [U.S. Department of Labor News Release, 29 April 1979] However, this breakdown shows that, except for the five questions mentioned above, the mean responses from both districts were similar. Feelings about poor pay and shrinking benefits were not significantly different between the two districts in the responses to questions (7) and (8). It should be noted, however, that in the comments section of the questionnaire, 8th District personnel, much more frequently than 12th District personnel, stated dissatisfaction or greater unhappiness with their military benefits. The authors attribute this to the scarcity of military commissaries, exchanges, and hospitals in the south Texas area, whereas these facilities are relatively readily available in the San Francisco area.

b. Breakdown by Reenlistment Intentions

The respondents were then categorized by reenlistment intentions. Four different groupings were used. The groupings and number of respondents in each were: definitely staying in (61), leaning towards staying in (68), leaning towards getting out (63), and definitely getting out (72). The purpose of this categorization was to determine if there were different responses to other items in the questionnaire depending on the respondents' reenlistment intentions. The responses to twenty-two questions were found to be significantly different among the four reenlistment intention groupings. As might be expected, it was found that in general those who stated they were getting out, indicated they were more dissatisfied with the Coast Guard than those who stated that they were remaining. [Appendix 9 is a complete listing of these questions where significant differences were found.]

c. Breakdown by Present Enlistment Status

Next, the respondents were categorized according to their present enlistment status. The respondents were divided into three groupings. The groupings and number of respondents in each were: first enlistment (91), second enlistment (124), and third or subsequent enlistment (49). The purpose of this categorization was to ascertain whether variations in the respondents' reasons for withdrawing from the Coast Guard or discontent could be attributed to their present enlistment status. Responses to eleven questions were significantly different. [See Appendix 10 for a complete listing.] This analysis showed that ordinarily the longer a respondent had been in the service the less dissatisfied he was with certain measures of the characteristics of service life. It is unknown whether this is the result of a selection process, dissatisfied men leaving the service, or the result of change, the person or the organization changes improving their

compatibility with each other. It cannot be said that second or third enlistment petty officers were satisfied or pleased with issues raised by the questionnaire, only that they were relatively less dissatisfied with those issues classed as negative. It is noteworthy that feelings about poor pay and shrinking benefits were not significantly different between the three enlistment categories.

d. Breakdown by type of duty

Finally, the respondents were separated by their type of duty station. Three groups were used to provide this breakdown: afloat (72), ashore (149), and air stations (43). Differences in responses unique to current duty assignments were sought. Answers to eight questions were found to be significantly different. [A complete listing of these questions is provided in Appendix 11.] Surprisingly, in all but one of the eight questions (pride in Coast Guard missions) it was apparent that those assigned to an air station were more dissatisfied with certain aspects of the Coast Guard than those assigned to units afloat or ashore. Prior to this breakdown, it was expected that respondents serving aboard ships and cutters would express greater levels of unhappiness than would respondents serving ashore.

e. Summary

Respondents were separated into categories to learn how the responses to the various items on the questionnaire would fluctuate according to selected classifications. Respondents were first divided by district. For the most part surveyed petty officers answered the questionnaire similarly regardless of district. The largest number of dissimilar responses was found in the breakdown using stated reenlistment intentions. Those leaning

towards getting out or definitely leaving the Coast Guard, were more dissatisfied with certain measures of service life than those planning on reenlisting. However, all groups expressed negative feelings about pay, benefits, leadership, and subordinates. Personnel remaining in the Coast Guard found their jobs more meaningful, had more pride in the service's missions, and responded less negatively regarding leadership. Respondents were divided by present enlistment status. As might be expected it was found that the longer an individual had been part of the organization the more positive he was likely to be in answering the questionnaire. Finally categorization was made by present type of duty: afloat, ashore, or at an air station. This revealed that air station personnel in the surveyed population were generally more dissatisfied with many features of the service (including leadership, promotions, benefits, and Coast Guard missions) than were personnel assigned to vessels or shore stations.

C. INTERVIEWS

1. Introduction

Interviews were conducted in the San Francisco area by the authors between 21-24 May 1979. The interviews were to help substantiate and amplify the responses received from the questionnaires. First, a description of those interviewed is given to help better understand some of the responses. Next, a breakdown of the stated reasons for leaving or being dissatisfied with the Coast Guard is given. Finally, each reason is examined and specific cases as told to the interviewers are presented.

2. Description of those interviewed

Thirty-three interviews were conducted at seven different units. Those interviewed were either E-5's or E-6's in their second Coast Guard

enlistment. The following is a breakdown of those interviewed:

CATEGORY	NUMBER
RANK	
1st Class Petty Officer (E-6)	21
2nd Class Petty Officer (E-5)	12
TYPE OF UNIT	
Ashore	17
Afloat	10
Air Station	6
MARITAL STATUS	
Married	24
Single	9
AGES (Average Age was 27.4 years)	
20-24 years (incl)	6
25-28 years	17
29-32 years	7
33-and over	3
TIME IN SERVICE	
Average time in the Coast Guard	7 yrs
Average total military service (7 interviewees had prior military service)	7.7 yrs

RATES

BM	6	QM	4	FT	2	Aviation	2
YN	5	ET	3	SK	2	SS	1
MK	4	RM	2	GM	2	TOTAL	33

Only personnel in their second enlistment were interviewed. Therefore, it was possible to determine the reasons why they had reenlisted for a second tour. The interviews were subjectively evaluated to determine the most important reason for each individual's reenlistment decision. The ranking of those reasons is shown below:

REASONS FOR REENLISTMENT	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PER-CENTAGE
No suitable employment available in the civilian sector	10	30.3
Job security	9	27.3
Satisfied with the Coast Guard as a career	5	15.2
Variable Reenlistment Bonus	3	9.1
Miscellaneous	3	9.1
None stated	3	9.1
	33	100.0

The first and second reasons, which account for almost 60% of the stated reasons for reenlisting, can be considered as similar. They reflect the civilian employment environment as perceived by the interviewees. Either they saw no civilian jobs comparable to their current jobs in the service, or those jobs which were available were not seen as leading to meaningful or satisfactory careers. Both reasons are related to organizational externalities which the Coast Guard can not influence.

The third most frequently stated reason, satisfaction with the Coast Guard as a career, is, however, directly related to the service. Diverse factors made up the expressed satisfaction: for example, "at that time I felt the pay and benefits were good," or "I reenlisted because I was working for an outstanding boss...this was probably the best time of my career..." It is interesting to note that of the five men who reenlisted because of stated satisfaction with the Coast Guard as the primary reason, four are leaning towards reenlisting again and only one is thinking of leaving the service.

3. Breakdown of reenlistment intentions

Having reenlisted for a second tour for various reasons will these men reenlist for a third tour? The following is a breakdown of those interviewed regarding their reenlistment intentions at the end of their second enlistment.

INTENTION TO REENLIST AT THE END OF THEIR SECOND ENLISTMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	
Definitely staying in	9	27.3	
Leaning towards staying in	9	27.3	= 54.6%
Leaning towards getting out	9	27.3	
Definitely getting out	6	18.2	= 45.5%
	33	100.0	

The percentage breakdown by reenlistment intentions is similar to the breakdown provided by the questionnaires. The questionnaires indicated that 48.8% of the respondents were staying in or leaving towards staying in, and that 51.2% of the respondents were considering leaving or definitely leaving the service.

4. Breakdown of reasons for leaving or dissatisfaction

Interviews were designed to obtain from the interviewee his reasons for leaving the service, or, if staying, those factors about the Coast Guard which troubled him. The following is a breakdown of the negative factors brought out by the interviews:

FACTORS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE MENTIONING
Poor pay	18	54.5
Poor leadership	15	45.4
Decreasing benefits	11	33.3
Poor subordinates	10	30.3
Lack of specialization	9	27.3
Married/Single differences	9	27.3
Lack of discipline	7	21.2
Detailers	7	21.2
Poor feelings of accomplishment	7	21.2
Poor training opportunities	6	18.2
Reenlistment bonuses	6	18.2

In an effort to better understand how these factors are affecting those Coast Guardsmen interviewed, each factor will be discussed using the comments gathered during the interviews. It should be mentioned that the comments are those of the interviewee as recorded by the interviewer and that these comments express the world as seen by those interviewed.

Poor Pay

Pay was mentioned more than any other factor as being a reason for leaving the service or being dissatisfied with the service. The concern for pay could be broken down into three areas: (1) inadequate compensation for the

responsibility and amount of work; (2) purchasing power has decreased due to inflation from a high with the pay increase in 1971; (3) the high cost of living in the San Francisco Bay area.

> I'm responsible for a very valuable piece of property and am engaged in some very dangerous and critical work, and I don't feel that my pay reflects this.

> I'm working a second job in a gas station in order to just barely make it.

> When I reenlisted for the first time in 1974 I thought that I was doing well, but with the increasing inflation I feel like I'm getting left behind.

> My wife has to work just to get food on the table.

> It irritates me to see my civilian counterparts making so much more money and able to do things like buy a home and live reasonably well.

Poor Leadership

The leadership problems mentioned by the interviewees were for the most part aimed at junior officers, while only a few mentioned senior officers such as CO's and XO's. It is interesting to note that only one man mentioned a Chief's leadership and that was in a derogatory way.

> They (new Academy officers) are not willing to learn from me, they don't have any experiences themselves, but don't realize it. I know my job and rate yet every year we get new officers aboard who don't respect my judgment and knowledge.

> The new officers are very inexperienced and they do a lot of harm technically, professionally, and in leading.

> Some of the new junior officers have a holier-than-thou attitude, in other words, you can't teach them anything since they feel they know it already.

> I am really upset by the somewhat calloused attitude the senior officers display to enlisted men when they have nothing to get from them.

I sometimes feel treated like a second class citizen by officers and chiefs.

Decreasing Benefits

The feelings of those interviewed was that the package of benefits which they expected as part of the Coast Guard's obligation to them and their families is no longer as valuable in real terms as it once was. This is particularly true when they perceive people in industry getting better medical care, including dental, and better retirement plans. In addition, the decision to stop the G.I. educational benefits has caused some people to leave the service early to be able to use this benefit.

I really feel like I am being robbed, CHAMPUS rules are changed every year and CHAMPUS benefits are cut every year.

I got burned financially a couple of times because of inadequate CHAMPUS programs.

I don't think the PX's are a good deal anymore ... the commissaries provide me with a good deal on food, but the quality is not adequate.

If I stayed in another 10 years I'm not sure the G.I. benefits would be available and I want to use this benefit.

Poor Quality of Subordinates

This aspect is difficult to judge in any absolute terms, since the individuals interviewed were probably in leadership positions themselves for the first time. The quality of the subordinates might not have changed, but the interviewees now have some additional responsibility for their subordinates. Nevertheless, to those interviewed this was seen as a real problem and indicated to them that if they remain in the Coast Guard they will have to continue dealing with these subordinates.

I have to spend much of my time correcting them (subordinates) for things that I shouldn't have to.

People in the Coast Guard are being enlisted simply to fill quotas and the quality of them has deteriorated quite a bit.

I feel that I am having to increase the amount of work I do simply because someone in the chain of command higher up is not doing their job of enforcing the recruiting standards.

Lack of Specialization

This factor deals with the desire of those interviewed to stay in a specific task area. The general feeling was that these men want to be able to do their job well and feel proud of their accomplishments, but they feel they can not if they have to change the type of job they do every three years.

I don't like going from one type of job to another to another, learning the different aspects of the job and not really being able to become an expert in any one field of it.

The missions of the Coast Guard are becoming too diverse... I am being asked to do many different jobs and stay proficient at all of them.

When I leave this assignment I am going to have to return to the Coast Guard as a Yeoman, and that concerns me because I don't know how to be a Yeoman anymore, I've been in law enforcement for four years.

Inequity between Married/Unmarried

While this factor was mentioned in only nine interviews, eight of those that mentioned this were not married. The general feeling was there should be equal pay for equal work.

I get no BAQ and am expected to live aboard while I see people of the same rank and even lower get extra money and go ashore every night, while I have to live and eat my job 24 hours a day.

I feel that BAQ for married folks only is unfair, BAQ ought to be consolidated with regular base pay.

I feel like I'm being discriminated against because I'm single.

Lack of Discipline

This factor is quite similar to poor quality of subordinates, but addresses the way the Coast Guard is dealing with the offenders, not what the offenders have done.

> Being an E-6 in the Coast Guard means nothing anymore to me or anyone else ... I have no respect and no authority.

> Too often when a man is placed on report and goes to mast, harsh enough penalties are not imposed to make it worthwhile.

> They (subordinates) are treated like kings ... they go AWOL for a few months at a time and when they come back they are pampered.

Detailers

While this factor is called detailers, it probably should be labeled Coast Guard assignment policies. However, to the individuals it is the detailer who is the focal point for the assignment system. In general, the comments were directed at the system.

> I was transferred from the west coast to the east to take the job of a man who was transferred from the east coast to the west to take mine. We both wanted to stay where we were, the detailer told us that was too bad the decision was made and we had to change jobs.

> Their decisions appear to me to be completely arbitrary.

Poor Feelings of Accomplishment

This factor expresses the interviewees' dissatisfaction with their present work situation. To some extent it also includes dissatisfaction with leadership, quality of subordinates, and amount of specialization in his present day-to-day life.

> The reason I want to get out is that I don't feel like I am contributing anything to my unit. The _____ systems that I work on are in the dinosaur era, if it was ever to be used it would be completely ineffective and yet I'm spending my career working on this outdated, outmoded gear.

Aboard this unit I don't feel part of the crew ... lists would be passed around collecting monies for different occasions and I would never be included.

While I am always busy here, there is nothing very challenging about what I do or that requires very much intellect or creativity.

Poor Training Opportunities

This factor is in some ways similar to poor quality of subordinates in that the interviewees perceive that the amount of training for themselves and their subordinates has decreased in the recent past.

Originally the school for my rate was 28 weeks but it has been reduced to 18 now. This is simply not enough time and when the new men come to the unit we have to spend a lot of time bringing these guys up to speed.

I've applied for three different schools, two within my rate and the leadership school and I have yet to be allowed to go to any of these.

Reenlistment Bonuses

This program, once known as the VRB, Variable Reenlistment Bonus, now known as the SRB, Selective Reenlistment Bonus, is a source of confusion and irritation to many of the interviewed ratings. Only the ET's seemed happy with it since they obtained the maximum bonus possible when they reenlisted the first time (usually $10,000). However, the other rates were upset by the SRB because it was not the maximum, or was raised for their rate after they had reenlisted, and would not be available in any event for subsequent reenlistments. It appeared that a program designed to encourage reenlistments and satisfaction was in many cases actually having the opposite effect for those personnel reaching the end of their second enlistment.

I reupped one month and got a $2000 bonus and three months later the VRB had gone up to $10,000. Why wasn't I told by the command that it would be going up? Then I could have extended first and then reenlisted.

Coming in from another service, I was promised the VRB at the end of my first Coast Guard hitch by the recruiter. Now I find out that I am not qualified because of my prior NAVY time. I no longer qualify for the big payoff and it was one of the reasons I came in and planned to stick around. Its the only thing that can help make up for the low pay.

5. Summary

The interviews provided the authors with an insight and awareness of the problems of senior petty officers. This was found to be useful in interpreting the data from the questionnaires and the comments from the questionnaires. In general, the interviews and questionnaires produced the same results. Poor pay was the leading cause of dissatisfaction amongst interviewed petty officers. The second most frequently discussed item was leadership, followed again by benefits and poor subordinates. The interviews did raise two issues which were insufficiently addressed in the questionnaires: lack of specialization and reenlistment bonuses.

V. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research project was to attempt to isolate the causes of the high rate of turnover amongst first and second class petty officers in the Coast Guard. Coast Guardsmen stationed in San Francisco and in the south Texas area, from a large variety of units and occupational specialties, provided input to this research effort. Questionnaires and interviews were used as the survey technique to obtain information from first and second class petty officers. Two-hundred and sixty-four petty officers responded to the questionnaires and thirty-three petty officers from the San Francisco units were interviewed. The average age of a respondent was twenty-six and most were in their second or subsequent enlistment in the Coast Guard. More than half of those surveyed indicated they were definitely leaving or were considering leaving the Coast Guard at the end of their present enlistment.

As expressed by these petty officers, the major cause of voluntary separation from the service was declining benefits and inadequate pay. Additional causes were poor leadership, the poor quality of subordinates, and an inability to specialize in one aspect of their rates. Other causes of dissatisfaction were frequently expressed, but the aforementioned factors were the primary determinants of turnover behavior and decision-making amongst the surveyed petty officers.

Their perception of inadequate compensation and declining benefits was the most significant reason given for leaving the service, or if remaining the most significant cause of dissatisfaction. Military benefits such as medical, commissary, and exchange were seen as either unavailable or declining in monetary value or desirability. Since the civilian business

community appears to be improving its employee benefits, especially medical and dental assistance, the service member no longer regards his benefits as unique or as valuable as they once were. An additional concern of major proportions was the belief that the military retirement plan as presently structured was unstable, no longer guaranteed, and likely to be diminished in the near future. The recent termination of G.I. benefits appears to have had an immediate adverse effect upon retention rates and furthermore is perceived as a precursor of future reductions in military benefits.

Surveyed petty officers recognized that the value of their pay was rapidly eroding in this inflationary era. They were well aware that five and a half percent pay raises were insufficient in a time of ten to twelve per cent inflation. Already faced with increasing difficulty in providing for themselves and their families, and conscious of larger union wage settlements of thirty to thirty-five per cent over three years, the surveyed petty officers are growing more cynical and bitter about their financial compensation.

In addition, an unhappiness with the value of their pay in absolute terms was increased by an awareness of apparent inequities within the current military pay system. Suggestions to overhaul or modernize the pay system included eliminating the differences in pay and allowances between married and unmarried personnel, reducing the disparity between an officer's flight pay and an enlisted man's flight pay, and increasing sea duty pay to a meaningful level.

Much of the dissatisfaction with pay and benefits seemed to be projected into a lack of confidence in the service's senior level management. Senior Coast Guard leadership was often seen as ineffectual or worse unconcerned with improving the pay and benefits of the enlisted man. The leadership responsible for Coast Guard policies and procedures, and also leadership

at the operational level in the person to person context, was frequently rated poorly by the surveyed petty officers. The unhappiness with officers who created and approved policies and procedures was manifested by complaints concerning expanding Coast Guard missions, confusion and displeasure with the new uniforms, grooming standards, and the lack of the opportunity to specialize. Poor leadership from the respondents' immediate supervisors was also cause for much concern. Junior officers received much of the criticism directed at leadership, but both chief petty officers and peers were also admonished for poor leadership. Lack of professionalism, personal relations, and the lack of respect and confidence of junior officers for senior petty officers were of considerable importance in the career decisions of many senior petty officers.

Perhaps symptomatic of a siege mentality, the E-5's and E-6's expressed in their questionnaires and interviews strong opinions concerning the quality of their subordinates. They felt that much of the difficulty they experienced in supervising younger Coast Guardsmen was due to poor recruiting, inadequate training, and a slackening disciplinary system which most affected their coercive abilities. The frustrations of working with apparently unmotivated and unqualified juniors contributed to a sense of resignation or an inclination to leave the Coast Guard to avoid the headaches of supervising malcontents and incompetents.

Senior petty officers from both districts, stationed ashore or afloat, were commonly concerned about their own abilities to do the job. Aware of the failings of both their leaders and subordinates, they were worried about their own professionalism. Much of this was attributed to the Coast Guard and its assignment policies which did not allow them to specialize in a particular aspect of their rate or in one of the diverse missions of the service. Many petty officers felt that their training opportunities were limited.

They expressed a desire to remain in one specialty and to use the training they had received in a specialty to the maximum extent possible. The Coast Guard's recent emphasis in law enforcement duties has made those senior petty officers who became competent in this field wary of returning to a more rate-related job and those already in such a position concerned about having to become a law enforcement officer. Senior petty officers from all rates, involved in law enforcement or not, were worried about their capabilities in the next job. Thus Vessel Traffic System (VTS) and Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) quartermasters worried about returning to seagoing billets and gunners mates who had become competent inspectors at a Marine Safety Office (MSO) were concerned about their knowledge of their rate in their next assignment, etc. This one issue, specialization or lack of, had the single most serious adverse effect on the most positively reported aspect of the service, the job itself.

Surveyed first and second class petty officers were most likely to rate affirmatively pride in Coast Guard missions, interesting or meaningful work, and feelings of accomplishment on the job. They also recognized their employment in the service as being very secure. It is significant that these petty officers found their jobs to be rewarding in so many cases but frequently not rewarding enough to outweigh the negative features of government military service.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to determine what is causing senior petty officers, at least in two geographic areas, San Francisco and south Texas, to leave the Coast Guard, or if staying in, what causes dissatisfaction with the service. The primary causes as identified by surveyed and interviewed petty officers have been described in the conclusion. Having outlined the causes of voluntary separation from the service by these valuable personnel, there remains a need to address these causes in an effort to either eliminate them or reduce their impact. To say that nothing can be done, for example, with pay, and therefore ignore it is to continue to experience an unacceptable turnover rate. The following is a list of specific recommendations, as derived from this study of first and second class Coast Guard petty officers.

1. Increase pay and allowances to at least the same real level as obtained by the 1971 pay raise and keep it at that level by cost of living adjustments in the future which equal the rate of inflation.

2. Equally important, eliminate inequities in the present pay system. Some of the inequities pointed out by surveyed petty officers include the differences in pay and benefits between married and single personnel, the disparity between officer and enlisted flight pay, the inadequacy of sea duty pay, and the confusing complexities of the selective reenlistment bonus program.

3. Improve or at least maintain present benefits such as medical and dental care, and restore the G.I. Bill to those who enlisted while it was still in force. Stabilize the retirement plan. Provide compensation for those personnel stationed in areas without customary military benefits such as exchanges and commissaries.

4. Emphasize to junior officers in training both at the Coast Guard Academy and at Officer Candidate School, the experience, knowledge, and capabilities of senior petty officers. Inculcate an awareness and appreciation of the talents of these Coast Guard enlisted men.

5. Stress leadership in all training environments and in the field for petty officers, chief petty officers, and officers.

6. Reevaluate the Coast Guard's enlisted rate structure in view of the increasingly complex mission areas of the service. Despite its complications, some specialization within rate or the creation of new rates may be long overdue.

7. Increase the effort of senior management and staff to communicate to all ranks that they are sympathetic and trying to improve the lot of enlisted men.

Recommendations 1., 2., and 3. must of course be authorized by Congressional action. However, it remains essentially a job for the Coast Guard's senior management to convince and educate the legislature and the executive branch of the necessity for action now. The remainder of the recommendations can and must be addressed by the Coast Guard and its leadership if retention rates are to be improved and the professionalism of the service is to remain intact.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

Part 1 Introduction

The Coast Guard is suffering from high turnover within its enlisted ranks and a damaging loss of trained personnel. In an effort to identify specifically, the most important causes underlying individual Coast Guardsmen's reenlistment intentions, we are conducting a detailed study of E-5's and E-6's in the 12th and 8th Coast Guard Districts. Information developed will be used for research purposes only and will not be correlated to units or individual performance. Unless you wish to, do not sign the questionnaire. All responses will be treated as completely confidential.

We ask for your cooperation in answering the questions sincerely and honestly. Please feel free to add additional comments on the back or attach additional sheets. When answering the questions please base your answers and comments on your entire Coast Guard career, not just your experiences in your present assignments.

Part 2 Further Instructions

1) Please work alone.
2) Please take your time, it may take you from 45 minutes to an hour to complete, there are 18 questions.
3) Complete the questionnaire at one sitting if possible.
4) You may use pen or pencil.
5) When you are finished, place the completed sheets in the enclosed envelope, seal, and mail.

Part 3 Questions

1. Please indicate your rank E-_____ and Rate _____.

2. What type of unit is your current duty station?

Afloat	Ashore
HEC_____	Air Station_____
MEC_____	District _____
WLB_____	MSO/COTP _____
WPB_____	Base/Group _____
Other_____	SAR Station_____
	Training Ctr_____
	Other _____

Was this assignment one of you first three choices.

YES_____ NO_____

3. Please indicate how many years and months of Coast Guard service you have and your total military service.

Coast Guard	_____years	_____months
Total military service	_____years	_____months

4. What Coast Guard enlistment are you now serving on? Consider any extension you may currently be on as part of the enlistment you were on when you extended.

1st_____
2nd_____
3rd_____
4th_____
5th_____

5. Your Age_____
Your sex M_____ F_____
Marital status
Married_____
Single_____
Race_____

6. What are your reenlistment intentions?

_____definitely staying in
_____don't know but leaning towards staying in
_____don't know but leaning towards getting out
_____definitely getting out

7. The following items have been suggested as reasons for getting out. If you are planning on getting out, to what extent have they influenced your decision? If you're planning on staying in, to what extent did these factors annoy or trouble you?

Example:	No extent						Great extent
Not enough liberty:	1	2	3	(4)	5	6	7

The example indicates that to some extent, not enough liberty influenced his decision to get out.

	No extent						Great extent
a. Not enough pay	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. Poor recognition from public	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. Shrinking benefits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. Transfers too frequent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. Seldom recognized by officers or chiefs for work well done	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. Detailers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
g. Poor feelings of accomplishment on the job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
h. Coast Guard missions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
i. Boring work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
j. Too much duty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
k. Poor leadership	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
l. Job seems meaningless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
m. My wife & family aren't proud of my work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
n. Promotions are too slow	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
o. Poor retirement plan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
p. Poor quality of subordinates	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
q. Other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Following items have been suggested as reasons for staying in. To what extent have they influenced your decision? If you are planning on leaving the service please indicate to what extent these factors cause you to regret your decision.

		No extent						Great extent
a.	Good pay	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b.	The public recognizes that the CG is an outstanding service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c.	Good benefits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d.	Good retirement plan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e.	Good travel opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f.	Work is frequently praised and recognized when well done	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
g.	Detailers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
h.	Feelings of accomplishment on the job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
i.	Pride in Coast Guard missions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
j.	Interesting work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
k.	Lots of time off	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
l.	Meaningful work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
m.	Work my wife and family can be proud of	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
n.	Rapid and steady promotions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
o.	Good leadership	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
p.	High quality of subordinates	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
q.	Good job security	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
r.	Other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. Please list in order from high to low, the three most important items which led you to reach your decision to stay in or get out. Please use the items listed in questions (7) and (8).

1)

2)

3)

10. Please list three of the items from questions (7) and (8) which least influenced your decision, that is items which had absolutely no bearing on the decision you reached. Do not list positive factors, but those that you simply did not consider when reaching your decision.

1)

2)

3)

11. If you're leaning towards getting out or definitely getting out, have you received a civilian job offer?

Yes _____ No _____

If you're leaning towards staying in or definitely staying in, have you received a civilian job offer?

Yes _____ No _____

If you have received a civilian job offer, did someone recruit you for the job or did you go out and look for it.

_____ I was recruited for the job.

_____ I looked for and received a job offer.

Please name employer and title of job offer received.

12. How much did your wife or girl friend (or husband or boyfriend) influence your decision to stay in the Coast Guard or get out?

No extent						Great extent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

NA _____

13. What is more important to you, your job or your location?

Job _____ Location _____ Both equally important _____

14. List in order of preference the three Districts you would most want to be assigned to and the three least preferred Districts (or geographic areas).

Best _____ Worst _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

No preference _____

15. How greatly does the separation between officers and enlisted men, such as differences in pay, privileges, social status, size of quarters aboard ship, and salutes; affect your career intentions?

No extent						Great extent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16. If there were less differences, that is, officers and enlisted men were more often treated exactly the same way, would you have a greater tendency to stay in or consider service life improved?

_____ Yes

_____ No

17. Admiral Stewart, the Coast Guard's chief of personnel, is personally interested in those changes which you would like to make to improve the Coast Guard. In your own words, please tell us what you would change.

18. If you were Commandant what would you do to improve the Coast Guard?

APPENDIX 2

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE BY RATES

RATE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Boatswain Mate (BM)	46	17.4
Machinist Mate (MK)	32	12.1
Quartermaster (QM)	21	8.0
Yeoman (YN)	21	8.0
Radioman (RM)	18	6.8
Electronic Technician (ET)	15	5.7
Storekeeper (SK)	14	5.3
Subsistence Specialist (SS)	13	4.9
Damage Controlman (DC)	12	4.5
	11	4.2
	9	3.4
Hospital Corpsman (HM)	7	2.7
Radarman (RD)	7	2.7
Gunners Mate (GM)	6	2.3
Electronics Mate (EM)	5	1.9
	5	1.9
Telephone Technician (TT)	4	1.5
	3	1.1
	3	1.1
	3	1.1
	2	.8
Firecontrol Technician (FT)	2	.8
Sonar Technician (ST)	2	.8
Marine Science Technician (MST)	1	.4
Unknown	2	.8
	264	100.0%

APPENDIX 3

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE BY UNITS

UNIT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
High Endurance Cutter (WHEC)	43	16.3
Air Stations	43	16.3
Base/Group	33	12.5
Search and Rescue Stations	29	11.0
District Office	29	11.0
Other Ashore (Vessel Traffic System (VTS), Buoy Depot, Recruiting Offices)	27	10.2
Medium Endurance Cutter (WMEC)	13	4.9
Patrol Boats (WPB)	7	2.7
Other Afloat (Inland Buoy Tender (WLIC))	5	1.9
Buoy Tender (WLB)	3	1.1
Training Center	1	.4
Unknown	1	.4
	264	100.0%

APPENDIX 4

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE BY RACE

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
White	221	83.7
Black	6	2.3
Chicano	6	2.3
Filipino	6	2.3
Malayan	5	1.9
Oriental	2	.8
Samoan	1	.4
None Indicated	17	6.5
	264	100.0%

APPENDIX 5

RESPONSES TO QUESTION #9

Three Most Important Items Listed for Decision

			FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1st	1.	Not enough pay	63	24.2
	2.	Good job security	38	14.6
	3.	Good retirement plan	22	8.5
	4.	Pride in CG missions	15	5.8
	5.	Shrinking benefits	14	5.4
2nd	1.	Shrinking benefits	34	13.3
	2.	Not enough pay	26	10.2
	3.	Good travel opportunities	20	7.8
	4.	Good job security	18	7.1
	5.	Poor leadership	17	6.7
3rd	1.	Shrinking benefits	18	7.5
	2.	Poor leadership	15	6.2
	3.	Not enough pay	14	5.8
	4.	Good travel opportunities	14	5.8
	5.	Interesting work	14	5.8

APPENDIX 6

RESPONSES TO QUESTION #10

ITEMS WHICH LEAST INFLUENCED THE RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS 7 AND 8

	ITEM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1st	1. The public recognizes that the CG is an outstanding service	29	12.6
	2. Poor recognition from the public	23	10.0
	3. Good detailers	21	9.1
	4. Detailers	20	8.7
	5. Transfers too frequent	13	5.6
2nd	1. The public recognizes that the CG is an outstanding service	18	8.1
	2. Good detailers	17	7.7
	3. Lots of time off	15	6.8
	4. Poor recognition from the public	13	5.9
	5. Boring work	12	5.4
3rd	1. Lots of time off	15	7.3
	2. Too much duty	14	6.8
	3. Detailers	14	6.8
	4. Work my wife and family can be proud of	13	6.3
	5. Good subordinates	12	5.8
	6. Good travel opportunities	12	5.8

APPENDIX 7

MOST PREFERRED AND LEAST PREFERRED DISTRICTS BY PERCENTAGE

	MOST PREFERRED			LEAST PREFERRED		
DISTRICT	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd
1	3.0	.8	1.5	29.5	15.2	4.5
2	4.2	1.5	5.7	3.0	5.7	4.9
3	.8	.8	.8	26.9	24.2	10.2
5	1.9	1.9	4.5	3.4	5.7	15.9
7	9.8	10.2	7.6	2.7	4.2	7.2
8	13.6	12.1	6.1	1.5	3.0	3.8
9	1.1	3.8	5.7	3.8	4.5	7.2
11	9.1	8.0	13.9	.8	2.7	2.3
12	21.6	19.3	10.6	2.3	1.9	3.8
13	11.4	14.0	8.2	.4	1.9	.4
14	6.4	8.3	13.9	2.7	1.9	2.3
17	3.8	4.2	11.1	4.9	6.4	7.2
UNK	13.3	15.1	2.0	18.3	22.8	30.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

APPENDIX 8

BREAKDOWN OF RESPONDENTS BY DISTRICTS

QUESTIONS	DISTRICT	MEAN	SIGNIFICANCE
Poor Quality of Detailers	8th	3	.0003
	12th	4	
Dissatisfied with Coast Guard missions	8th	2	.03
	12th	2.6	
Officer/Enlisted distinction	8th	3.6	.02
	12th	4.3	

(For the above questions a mean of 1 signifies satisfaction with the item and a mean of 7 signifies dissatisfaction.)

Good Benefits	8th	2.3	.05
	12th	2.9	
Good Job Security	8th	5.2	.02
	12th	4.7	

(For the above questions a mean of 1 signifies dissatisfaction with the item and a mean of 7 signifies satisfaction.)

APPENDIX 9

BREAKDOWN OF RESPONDENTS BY REENLISTMENT INTENTION

QUESTIONS	REENLISTMENT INTENTION	MEAN	SIGNIFICANCE
Not enough pay	1. Definitely In	5.13	.05
	2. Leaning In	5.47	
	3. Leaning Out	5.95	
	4. Definitely Out	5.72	
Seldom recognized by Chiefs or Officers	1	2.90	.007
	2	3.00	
	3	3.50	
	4	3.95	
Too much duty	1	2.90	.03
	2	2.95	
	3	3.67	
	4	3.72	
Poor leadership	1	3.90	.0005
	2	3.80	
	3	4.40	
	4	5.08	
Job seems meaningless	1	1.86	.01
	2	2.22	
	3	2.73	
	4	2.75	
Officer/Enlisted Distinction	1	2.98	.0000
	2	3.69	
	3	4.66	
	4	4.72	

(For the above questions, a mean of 1 signifies satisfaction with the item and a mean of 7 signifies dissatisfaction)

Good Pay	1	2.49	.03
	2	2.08	
	3	2.59	
	4	1.77	
Good Benefits	1	3.09	.001
	2	2.77	
	3	2.96	
	4	1.96	

Good retirement plan	1	4.32	.0000
	2	3.27	
	3	3.82	
	4	2.61	
Good Travel Opportunity	1	4.54	.0002
	2	4.34	
	3	3.67	
	4	3.16	
Work is frequently praised	1	3.72	.0000
	2	3.16	
	3	2.55	
	4	2.10	
Good Detailers	1	2.77	.001
	2	2.75	
	3	2.25	
	4	1.77	
Feelings of Accomplishment	1	5.19	.0000
	2	4.46	
	3	3.49	
	4	2.88	
Pride in CG missions	1	5.66	.0000
	2	5.05	
	3	3.89	
	4	4.28	
Interesting Work	1	5.19	.0000
	2	4.83	
	3	4.19	
	4	3.38	
Lots of Time Off	1	3.18	.01
	2	3.12	
	3	2.83	
	4	2.22	
Meaningful work	1	5.20	.0000
	2	4.57	
	3	3.98	
	4	3.56	
Family proud of work	1	4.38	.0002
	2	3.76	
	3	3.26	
	4	2.79	

Rapid promotions	1	4.14	.01
	2	4.10	
	3	3.54	
	4	2.79	
Good Leadership	1	3.72	.0000
	2	3.13	
	3	3.08	
	4	2.09	
High Quality of Subordinates	1	2.85	.02
	2	2.44	
	3	3.12	
	4	2.20	
Good Job Security	1	5.63	.003
	2	5.13	
	3	4.59	
	4	4.47	

(For the above questions, a mean of 1 signifies dissatisfaction with the item and a mean of 7 signifies satisfaction.)

APPENDIX 10

BREAKDOWN OF RESPONDENTS BY ENLISTMENT STATUS

QUESTIONS	ENLISTMENT STATUS	MEAN	SIGNIFICANCE
Transfers too Frequent	1. First Enlistment	2.67	.05
	2. Second Enlistment	2.82	
	3. Third or Sub. Enl.	3.53	
Seldom recognized by Chiefs or Officers	1	3.77	.03
	2	3.05	
	3	3.51	
Poor feeling of Accomplishment	1	3.52	.01
	2	2.81	
	3	2.67	
Boring Work	1	3.09	.03
	2	2.55	
	3	2.27	
Poor leadership	1	4.84	.01
	2	4.06	
	3	4.09	

(For the above questions, a mean of 1 signifies satisfaction with the item and a mean of 7 signifies dissatisfaction.)

Good Benefits	1	2.25	.007
	2	2.81	
	3	3.19	
Good Retirement Plan	1	2.75	.0000
	2	4.00	
	3	3.89	
Work is frequently praised	1	2.40	.003
	2	3.09	
	3	3.29	
Feelings of accomplishment	1	3.23	.0000
	2	4.42	
	3	4.46	
Interesting work	1	3.77	.0004
	2	4.77	
	3	4.70	
Meaningful work	1	3.80	.003
	2	4.56	
	3	4.74	

(For the above questions, a mean of 1 signifies dissatisfaction with the item, and a mean of 7 signifies satisfaction.)

APPENDIX 11

BREAKDOWN OF RESPONDENTS BY PRESENT TYPE OF DUTY

QUESTIONS	TYPE OF DUTY	MEAN	SIGNIFICANCE
Shrinking Benefits	Air Station	6.47	
	Afloat	5.89	.02
	Ashore	5.67	
Seldom recognized by Chiefs or Officers	Air Station	4.30	
	Ashore	3.28	.003
	Afloat	2.93	
Dissatisfied with CG Missions	Afloat	2.86	
	Air Station	2.63	.05
	Ashore	2.14	
Poor Leadership	Air Station	5.11	
	Afloat	4.42	.01
	Ashore	4.09	
Slow Promotions	Air Station	3.30	
	Afloat	2.40	.01
	Ashore	2.23	
Poor Retirement Plan	Air Station	4.54	
	Ashore	3.47	.02
	Afloat	3.43	

(For the above questions, a mean of 1 signifies satisfaction with the item and a mean of 7 signifies dissatisfaction.)

Rapid Promotions	Afloat	1.90	
	Ashore	1.78	.005
	Air Station	1.53	
Good Leadership	Afloat	3.37	
	Ashore	3.06	.002
	Air Station	2.19	

(For the above questions, a mean of 1 signifies dissatisfaction with the item, and a mean of 7 signifies satisfaction.)

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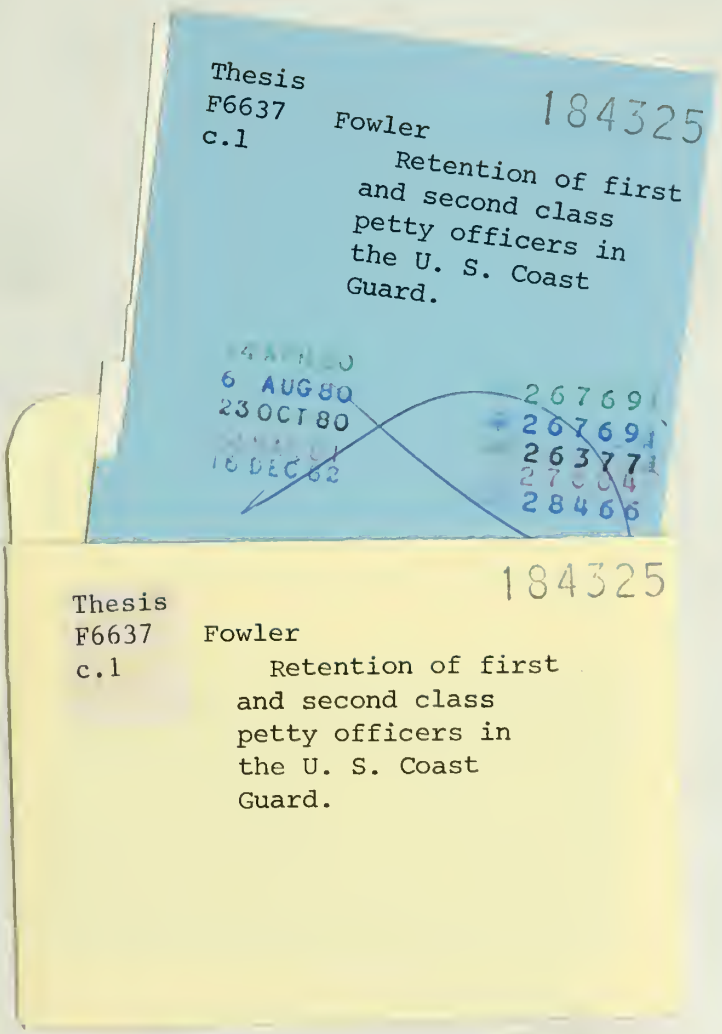
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